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of hateful curiosity —* MODEST

# REMARKS

ON THE

Bishop of LONDON's

SEVERAL

# DISCOURSES

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By PHILOTHEOS.

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M O D E S T



M O D E S T  
R E M A R K S, &c.

My L O R D,



HAVING formerly had the Pleasure of hearing from the *Pulpit*, most of the *Discourses* under Consideration, I was induced, on the *Publication* of them, to make a *Purchase* of your *First Volume*. It has been an old Custom with me, to make Remarks, for my own Use, on every Book I read. When I had finished my *Remarks* on your *First Volume*, I laid them by; but finding, some Time after, that your Lordship favoured the World with a *Second Volume*, (as I hope you will with a third, fourth, fifth, &c. to a *Baker's Dozen*!) I did the same with your *Second Volume*, remarking as I read; and having concluded, I found, on Perusal, that my *Remarks* on your Lordship's *Two Volumes* of *Discourses* would fill such a *Number of Pages* as would make a decent Appearance to the *Publick*. This I communicated to my *Bookseller*, who assured me, that the *Subject* was of the utmost Importance, and therefore encouraged me to send the *Manuscript* to the *Press*.

Common Fame (which hath arisen *à tribus bibliopolis*) assures us, that your Lordship's Sermons have met with a kind and general Reception among all Orders of Men. Great Numbers of Copies have been bought up by the Clergy; scarce a *Templar*, or a *Bench*er of the other *Inns of Law* is without them; and even *Heads of Colleges* and *Physicians* have not been behind in the general *Eclat*! This is certain, as for *Dissenters*, those of the *Saving-Grace* and the *Soul-saving Systems* must acknowledge, that your *Discourses* are suited to their *several Tastes*; and the *Quaker* may easily perceive, that when your Lordship was engaged in this pious Work, you was not quite destitute of the *Light within*.

Truth is what I have a particular Regard for, and I do here solemnly affirm, that your Lordship's Sermons are the best Preservative against *Deism*, and so excellently well compiled, for the Support of *Revealed Religion*, that nothing exceeds them, except that very *worthy Performance* of Dr. Warburton's, *The Divine Legation of Moses*—I heartily wish, that your Lordship may, as you have lately had the Pleasure of a Renewal of your *L—ses*, live to partake the same by way of *Ditto*, for it is all one to me who is Bishop of London; and I hope your Lordship (having had fine Opportunities!) will die richer than your Predecessor *RESTITUTUS*, who though starving had the Honour to be present at the *First General Council of Nice*, held in the Year of *Christ* 325.

I have, my Lord, in the first Place, made a few general Observations on your Lordship's *Discourses*; and, secondly, I have proceeded to make some particular Remarks thereon: And I have, for the Ease of the Reader, called your *Affertions* or *Doctrines*, or whatever else your Lordship shall please to call them, *POSITIONS*; as you will see as we go on.



First, Some general Observations on your Lordship's *Discourses* are as follow :

1. That they are finely penned, consist of well turned Periods, full of rhetorical Flourishes, and adorned with the Sayings of *Moses* and the Prophets.

2. That the Work is printed on a genteel Type or Letter, good Paper, and in a neat Manner ; by which it appears that your *Booksellers* and *Printer* have done you *Honour*.

3. That as to the general Compliment of them, they are calculated for the Meridians of the *Temple* and *St. James's*; and they are *Discourses* very proper to be exhibited in the CHAPEL-ROYAL, and in the most polite Congregations between *White-Friars* and *Chelsea-Fields*.

4. That these *Discourses* were the most proper to be preached in the *Temple*, as a Preservative against *Deism*, that *Society*, GOD knows ! always abounded, as it does now, with too many Adherents to that abominable *Anti-priestcraft Sect*.

5. I never heard that any of these Sermons were preached to the East of the *Temple* ; and, indeed, it must be allowed, they are not calculated for the *City-Meridian*. Wherefore, if the Lord Mayor, or any one of his Brethren the Aldermen be deistically inclined, I beg he would immediately buy one of your *Books* ; and I promise him, that he will by reading thereof soon be convinced of his *Error*, repent of his *Sin*, and save his *Soul*.

6. With great Ease and Certainty (if ever required) I could point out the *Authors* your Lordship has made use of in compiling these *Discourses*.

7. Then also when you composed this or that Part, and whether you lived *that Day* upon *Beef*, *Mutton*, *Fowl*, *Fish*, *Fricassees*, *Ragouts*, *Pudding*, *Water-gruel*, or quite fasted ?



8. By other Parts; I can tell when you carried your *Point* at Court, and how you stood with the *King*, *Queen*, or the *Primier*; but in no Part of your Work can I so much as perceive, that you was *then* in Fear of an *Earthquake*; or that this *City*, since your *Episcopate*, would be destroyed as were the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*.

—But all this is *little* to the Purpose, as I am sure your Lordship will think.

We will therefore proceed,

Secondly, To make some particular *Remarks* on what your Lordship has advanced in the Body of your Work, thus :

Remarks on your Lordship's First Position, *viz.*

“ That eternal Life can be had only by living and  
“ conversing in this World agreeably to the Will  
“ of God.” See *Several Discourses*, Vol. I. p. 36.

Your Lordship says, in the foregoing Part of this Page, that “ this Principle must be, and is by all  
“ allowed.” Laconick truly! I answer, that I do not allow it, and therefore beg Leave to put your Lordship upon the Proof of it. If you should say, that I am a weak Adversary, and consequently not worthy of Notice; that may be true! but neither of these Excuses will serve your Lordship; for as your Lordship is by Divine Providence (as you say) Bishop of this Diocese, you certainly have in Cure as much my *Soul*, as that of any one else within your *Spiritual Jurisdiction*. It lies therefore on *You*, to resolve me all the following *Doubts* or *Queries*; 1. At what Time it was first discovered, and by whom, that *Man* is compounded of such an *immaterial Being* as will subsist to all *Eternity*? 2. When and why the *Doctrine of Life eternal* was at first introduced into the (*Jewish, Pagan*) *Christian Church*? 3. Who invented the *Devil*, and why he  
was

was invented ; and particularly the Reason why God created such a *Rival*, who should always be acting repugnant to his Will ? And, 4. What is the Will of God ? for I am afraid, that most of the written Revelations of his Will were invented and introduced about *Constantine's* Time, and are the Fictions and Reveries of Men of the like Stamp and Genius with your Lordship.

To the *Position*, the Author says, that no one Man, as Things are now situated, can in this Life act, according to what is supposed to be the Will of God, allowing our *Systems* and *Bodies of Divinity* to be the *Standard*.

As to the *Will of God*, the Author says, he being a *Moralist* or *Naturalist*, he humbly conceives to be this, that all Men are equal ; that every Man has an equal Right to Life, and to enjoy the good Things thereof according to his Seniority or Standing. He says, moreover, that there are but three Sins, to wit, *Murther*, *Sodomy*, and *Coire femina immundâ*, let the Statesman, or Divine, make what he will of it ; all the rest are Invention.

Remarks on your Lordship's Second Position, viz.  
 " How shall Sin against God be punished, and yet  
 " the Sinner saved ? " *Vol. I. p. 48.*

Your Lordship is too great a Scholar for me, and so profoundly learned, and you have dived so far into the Secrets of the Almighty, that I am, I confess, not able to trace you ! You seem to have read *Dun Scotus*, *Thomas Aquinas*, our Countryman *Bunyan*, &c. and all the *Schoolmen*, all the mystical, typical, enigmatical and prophetical Theology, with Glossary upon Glossary, Annotation upon Annotation, and so many Criticisms, different Readings and Refinements, that I must herein subscribe to your Lordship's better Judgment, who has through three Bishopricks felt the Excellency of what you preach,  
 and

and the Sweets of that Religion you so strenuously support, that you are led with great Cordiality to say, *Vol. I. p. 2.* " I believe and am sure, that thou art " that Christ, the Son of the Living God ;" not at all like that wicked and jejune Pope, (*Leo the Tenth*) of whom *Bembo* his Secretary reports, that he constantly used this Saying ; " It has been long and " well-known how beneficial this Fable of Jesus " Christ has been to Us and Our Predecessors." *Rapin, Vol. I. p. 744.*

Remarks on your Lordship's Third Position, *viz.* " That the Mysteries of the Gospel are most necessary to obtain Pardon and eternal Glory." *Vol. I. p. 50.*

But as though your Lordship had forgot yourself, you say, four Pages after, " That Men in the Beginning of the World wanted neither Revealed " Religion nor Mysteries." *Page 54.* Wherefore I beg of your Lordship, when at Leisure, to answer the two following Queries : 1. That if neither *Revealed Religion* nor *Mysteries* were necessary in the Beginning of the World, how they came to be so since the Year of *Christ*, three Hundred and twenty-five ? 2. Who, ever besides Priests, required the Belief of Mysteries, Arcana and Incomprehensibilities, or, as the Vulgar say, the *In-come-at-ables* ; but in a more especial Manner, it will lie on you to shew, that the Belief of these *In-come-at-ables* (Mysteries, or rather Fictions) is absolutely necessary to Pardon and eternal Glory ; because we daily see, that no one will believe any Thing in the Mathematicks, Trigonometry, Algebra, &c. but what can be demonstrated.

The *Position* is as much as to say, That if Men do not believe the following *Mysteries* they cannot obtain Pardon of their Sins, and be admitted into Heaven to enjoy eternal Glory ; to wit, the Incarnation

nation of *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, as related by *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke*, *Matth. i. 18—25* ; and *Luke i. 26, &c.* his hypostatical Union with the human Nature ; his miraculous Birth, his Death, Resurrection and Ascension ; the Grace of *Jesus Christ*, and the Manner of its Operation in our Hearts, and the Resurrection of the Dead. According to your Lordship's Opinion, I shall not obtain Pardon and eternal Glory ; for, I readily and sincerely confess, I do not believe any one of the above Mysteries ; and this is certain, neither God nor *Christ* has required the Belief of them as necessary to Pardon and eternal Glory. Ecclesiasticks, indeed, may and have required Men, under the Pain of Damnation, to believe the above Mysteries as necessary to eternal Glory ; General Councils, I am sensible, have required the Belief of these and many more, but then they are *Bodies* which it is plain were not governed by the unerring Spirit of Truth, but by that of Influence, Deceit, Pride and Corruption. Besides, the Absurdity of the Doctrine, the *Holy Ghost* to get a Woman, and that Woman a pure Virgin too, with Child of a perfect Man ; it cannot be, no *Spirit* can impregnate a Woman ; Matter only can do it : but I forbear. Nor can I conceive, how the Grace of *Christ*, unless by *Grace* be understood *Good-will*, can be diffused to all People over the Face of the whole Earth.

Remarks on your Lordship's Fourth Position, *viz.*  
 “ The *New Testament* Doctrines are relative to the  
 “ Office and Dignity of *Jesus Christ* as our Redeem-  
 “ er, and therefore there was no explicit Declara-  
 “ tion of them either before or under the Law of  
 “ *Moses.*” Page 73.

If I understand this, the Meaning is, that no one of the Prophets prior to the Birth of *Christ* ever so much as imagined, that *Jesus* of *Nazareth* was to  
 be



be the Redeemer, therefore they did not set him forth to the World as such. I judge, it may readily be allowed, that *Moses* never dreamt of such a Kind of Redeemer, we have since supposed *Jesus* to be. No; he only conjectured, that the *Hebrews* would some Ages, after his Death, become the Slaves of some one of the *Eastern Monarchs*; and that there would, in Process of Time, arise from among them, of their Brethren, a mighty one, who would lead them forth to Battle, redeem them, and bring them again from their Captivity. Such, says your Lordship, *Jesus* is, and he has redeemed us by his Blood from our Sins, and here I heartily wish your Lordship would shew, we are better Moralists at this Time, than we (*Britons*) were before the Preaching of *Christianity* in this Island.

Before we proceed any farther, it will be necessary here to inform the Reader, what was at first meant by the Term *Redeemer*, and also what by *Christianity*.

Churchmen at this Time of Day set forth unto us, *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, as a Person who came into the World to redeem us from Sin. But this Doctrine was not the first and genuine Notion of Redemption; it did not take Place till some Time about the *Constantine* Period. The first and genuine Idea of a *Redeemer* was, that a Person, endued with sufficient temporal Power, would, in the Fulness of Time, arise, and redeem or free all the Children of *Israel* from the Bondage of the *Romans*, gather together the scattered and dispersed Seed of *Jacob*, and reign King in *Zion*, or *Jerusalem*, for ever. Thus we see, that *Anna* the Prophetess, who, as may be gathered from *Luke* ii. credited the *Mysteries* then reported concerning the Conception, Birth, &c. of *Jesus*, and on that Account she gave Thanks likewise unto the LORD, and spake of him to all them who



who looked for Redemption in *Jerusalem*, i. e. she told all who expected a temporal Redeemer, that he *Jesus* must be the Redeemer, at the same Time she enforced her Argument from those wonderful Stories told of him by *Mary* and *Elizabeth*. But when the *Constantine* Fathers found, that *Christ* delayed his Coming as a temporal Redeemer, they changed this temporal Doctrine into a spiritual one, and thenceforward they began to teach the People, that *Christ* did not come for such secular and temporal Ends, but to redeem Mankind from the Power and Dominion of *Sin*; and because St. *Paul* (or one of the Fathers his *Interpolators*) had said, *By one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned*, Rom. v. 12. Hence they cooked up the Doctrine of *Original Sin*, by which artful and very wicked Contrivance they made all Men *Sinners* before God, and so all were made liable to *eternal Wrath*. And because there were some Men, in those early Days, who would not assent to and subscribe such an absurd and ridiculous Doctrine, and in Opposition to it resolutely affirmed this ancient Truth, That Men were no farther tainted or polluted by the Transgressions and *Sins* of their Ancestors, than so far as they imitated them in their vicious Actions, they were condemned by many *General Councils*, anathematized, and persecuted even to Death.

Thus we see what at first was meant by the Term *Redeemer*. Which Sense of the Word the Reader may see in many other Places in the *Old* and *New Testament* referred to in the Margin (a). The first Redeemer, viz. *Jesus of Nazareth*, was a temporal Redeemer; such his Mother, Relations, Disciples, and all the *Jews* expected him to be; and such a Re-

C

deemer

(a) Isa. xli. 14. xliii. 14. xliv. 24. Jer. l. 34.  
 Luke i. 68. ii. 38. xxi. 28. xxiv. 21.

deemer likewise he continued to be for full Three Hundred Years. The second Redeemer, who is now, as it is said, in Heaven, is a *spiritual Redeemer*, and he has continued to be such a Redeemer ever since the Year *Three-hundred-twenty-five* down to the present Time; and how much longer he may continue to be our spiritual Redeemer is out of the Power of any Man to tell.

As it has fared with the Term *Redeemer*, so it has likewise fared with the Term *Christianity*. And here it must be noted, that *Natural Christianity* is one Thing, and *Spiritual Christianity* is another. By *Natural Christianity* I would be understood to mean those Opinions and Doctrines which naturally arose on *Christ's* assuming to himself, the Messiahship. By *Spiritual Christianity* I mean, those Doctrines and Opinions which obtained about the Time of *Constantine*.

To explain this Matter; for the Ease of the Reader, I shall first set down the principal Doctrines of *Natural Christianity*; and afterwards those of *Spiritual Christianity*.

First, The Doctrines of *Natural Christianity* are:

1. *Jesus of Nazareth* is the Messiah; — is he whom all Men expect to deliver the *Jews* from the Bondage, Tyranny and Subjection of the *Romans*, and who would gather together all the chosen People of the Lord from all the Nations under Heaven; and who would fix the Seat of his Empire in *Jerusalem*.
2. That he (*Christ*) for taking on himself the Messiahship, the Office of a Redeemer; *i. e.* for assuming to himself Kingly Power, became obnoxious to the *Roman Government*, and was thereupon as a Traitor to *Cæsar* crucified.
3. That he (*Christ*) being dead and buried, was raised again to Life supernaturally; and that after he was so risen, he was seen of his Mother, many other Women, and eleven other

other Men, (since stiled *Apostles*) his constant Companions, whom he had promised to make Rulers and Judges of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*. 4. That he ascended into Heaven in the Presence of a great Multitude of *Galileans* (b). 5. That from that Instant there arose a general Expectation of his (*Jesus's*) second immediate Appearance to restore the Kingdom to *Israel*. This I call *Natural Christianity*, and these are the principal and natural Articles of its Faith.

And this *Natural Christianity*, as I have already observed, and its Articles of Faith flourished and subsisted till the Opening of the Fourth Century. At which Time this *Natural Christianity*, and the temporal Expectations thereon, was, by the then Fathers of the Church converted into what I call, for Distinction Sake, *Spiritual Christianity*. The *Constantine* Fathers, finding that upwards of three Hundred Years were elapsed, and *Christ* had not appeared to restore the Kingdom to *Israel*, or to give his Followers and Disciples the least Rest from Persecution, which they had suffered and did suffer on his Account, set about spiritualizing the above *Natural Christianity*, and so trimmed the Doctrines thereof into the following; viz. 1. *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, whom they had just then advanced to the Dignity of *God the Son*, is the Messiah, but he came not to answer temporal Views and Expectations; to free us from our Obedience to Governors. No: he came to free us from the Power and Dominion of Sin; and to save us from the Wrath of God due to that Sin; by his own Example to teach us to be obedient to all those Rulers whom God in his Providence had or should set over us; and that he now sitteth at the Right Hand of God, cloathed with Flesh, having there that very Body which suffered on the

Cross, interceding for all those who call on his Name, and who rely on his Merits. And that at the End of the World, he [*Christ*] will come to Judgment, and punish or reward all his Followers, according to their several Works. 2. That, at the End of the World, *Christ* shall also come in his Glory, and raise from the Dead all those who are in their Graves, and they shall be caught up into the Air, to meet the Lamb of God. 3. That *Christ* died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification, that as in *Adam* all died, even so in *Christ* all shall be made alive. 4. That the Blood of *Christ* was shed on the Cross to wash away our Sins. With an infinite Number of other such-like Doctrines too tedious to recite, many of which were coined at the *Constantine* Period, and innumerable others since, as had I Room I could easily evince.

But I cannot leave this Subject, without taking the Liberty here to present your Lordship and the Reader, with a brief Narrative, in what Manner, what I call *Natural Christianity* was at first introduced. Out of which also I will shew in what Manner sprang *Spiritual* [or what should rather be called *Artificial*] *Christianity*.

1. I will briefly shew in what Manner *Natural Christianity* was introduced.

Soon after the Death of *Solomon*, we are told, that Ten Tribes, out of Twelve, revolted, and would not serve *Reboboam* his Son, which divided the *Jews* into two Nations or Houses, viz. the House of *Judah*, and the House of *Israel* (c). This Division begat a Civil War, and from this Time this People, who before were unacquainted with the Slaughter of one another, weakened themselves so by their intestine Broils, that in a few Years they became an easy Prey to *Abasuerus* the *Assyrian* Monarch. But what

(c) 1 Kings xii. 20, 21. 2 Chron. x. 17. xi. 17. xiii. 7.



what was the Reason that induced this Prince to seize them and their Land, and take them, and disperse them into all the Kingdoms, or Provinces, of his Empire? *Spiritualists* say, It was because the *Jews* were given to Idolatry; and the Prophets are represented as threatening the *Jews* with Captivity as a Punishment for this Crime. But this was not the Reason why the *Jews* were led into Captivity; if it be any Reason, it is a Reason why they should not be made Captives. Now the only Reason that induced *Abasuerus* to destroy the Commonwealth of the *Jews* was this: *viz.* Because they, the *Jews*, were by the Principles and Precepts of their Law-giver, the Enemies and Persecutors of all the neighbouring States, they were commanded to root out the *Heathens*, [i. e. all the People and Nations who would not receive the Revelation and Law of *Moses*] and we find they were so observant of this Precept, that they cut off whole Nations, Men, Women and Children, all except the pure Virgins who had not lain with Man; whom their Rulers commanded to be saved, and they were divided among the Tribes (*d*), only to the Tribe of *Levi* a greater Number was given than to any other, because it was the LORD's Tribe, that out of these Virgins *Israel* might encrease and multiply, and become as the Stars of Heaven, or as the Sand of the Sea for Multitude. They pretended likewise, that they were the chosen People of God, and that they should, in Process of Time, overcome and rule the whole Earth. They were the first People who introduced into Practice, Persecution on Account of Religion, or on Account of the different Manner of Worshipping. This their Pretension to Universal Monarchy, rendered them odious to the great Monarchy, or Monarchies, then subsisting, and at last determined the *Assyrian* Prince

(*d*) Numb. xxi. 35. xxxi. 9, 17.

Prince abovementioned to send his Armies against them, sack *Jerusalem*, destroy the *Temple*, and to take them the *Jews*, and to disperse them into the One Hundred and twenty-seven Provinces over which he ruled. *For he reigned from India even to Ethiopia (e).*

The *Jews* being thus banished *Judea*, &c. and sent many of them into the most remote Provinces, and scattered, as it were, throughout the *Assyrian* Empire, in the general Calamity, it is said, the Books and Law itself were lost. To repair this great Loss, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Zorobabel* and others were induced to collect into one Body [for the Five Books of *Moses* were till the Time of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, when the *Greeks* first divided them into five Parts, but one Book or Volume] the Law, Ceremonies, and Ritual Observances of the *Hebrews*, with such authentick Accounts of the Transactions and Traditions of *Moses* and the Patriarchs they could any Way get.

This being done, Copies thereof, viz. of the Pentateuch, for the Service of those who could not come up to *Jerusalem*, by Reason of their Dispersion and Distance, were wrote out, and sent to them. And this introduced the *Scribe*, and some time after the *Rabbin*.

When the *Jews* were thus dispersed, the Seers (f) among them, and those who were for keeping and preserving the *Jews* in the Observation of the *Mosaic* Modes of Worship, gave out, that there were certain ancient Foretellings or Prophecies which declared, that, in the Fulness of Time, God would raise them a Redeemer, a Deliverer, a Saviour, who should gather them together from the four Corners under Heaven, and restore the Kingdom to *Israel*,

(e) *Esther* i. 1.  
*Priests and Politicians.*

(f) By *Seers* we are to understand

*Israel*, as in the Days of *David* and *Solomon*. Nay, *Jeremiah* went farther, and promised them, that in those Days [in the Days of the Messiah] *the Gentiles* should come unto them, [that is, they should be subject to the *Jews*] from all the Ends of the World (g).

Hence arose the Order of the *Prophets*, that is, of such who took on them to persuade the *Jewish* People to adhere to the Law of *Moses*, for that in a short Time God would raise up unto them a Saviour, like unto *Moses*, unto whom they should hearken.

These *Prophets* prophesied these great Things with a political Design, with Intent to hearten the People, and to keep them, though dispersed so widely, as much united among themselves and separate from the *Gentiles* as was possible. By which Means there prevailed throughout the then known World, a general Expectation of the Rise and Appearance of some great Prince and Lawgiver, whom the *Jews* stiled the Messiah, or the Anointed, who should free them from the Power of the *Romans*, and restore them, not only to the Rule of *Canaan*, as in the Days of *David* and *Solomon*, but also that his [the Messiah's] Kingdom should extend to the four Corners of the World. And now [that is, a short Time before the Incarnation of *Jesus*] it was a common Saying of the Rabbins, and the People of *Judea*, and of all such who wished for the Appearance of this mighty Deliverer; viz. "Blessed is he who shall live and be thought worthy to eat Meat in the Kingdom of the Messiah." So great and so general was this temporal Expectation among all Sorts of People, that it is reported, the Senate of *Rome* decreed, about the Time of the Birth of *Augustus*, that no Male that Year should be brought up. All those whose Wives were with Child, conceived

ceived great Hopes, applying the Prophecies to themselves, every Woman wishing and hoping to bring forth that Messiah, whom it was expected would restore the Kingdom to *Israel*.

Every Woman wished to be the Mother of this great Deliverer, in the natural Way. What Artifices [for that Age was not without them] were made use of to impose on the Credulous, that is, on those who wished these mighty Things might come to pass, is wholly out of the Power of any Man to say or conceive; but that many, *very many*, Artifices were set on Foot, and that many, *very many*, Pretenders to the Messiahship did appear, is evident both from sacred and profane Authors. At length our *Jesus*, as we are credibly informed, laid Claim to the Messiahship, when he was about thirty Years of Age. But though *Jesus* did not lay Claim to the Messiahship till he was of that Age, we are not therefore to suppose, that he did not know that he was the Messiah till then. It is highly probable, our *Jesus* knew himself to be the Messiah, or was by *Mary* persuaded he was so, when he was thirteen Years of Age, at which Time he went up to *Jerusalem*, and there leaving his Father and Mother and Kinsfolk, he was found disputing in the *Temple* with the Doctors. Undoubtedly, *Mary* his Mother had, on or before this Time, told her Son *Jesus* [who by the way from this Story appears to be a forward Youth] in what a miraculous Manner [which also, by the way, was an Imposition upon the *Youth*, but she did it to conform him to the ancient Prophecy (*b*), and to stimulate him, her only Son, to undertake the Deliverance of the *Jews* from the *Roman Slavery and Bondage*] he was conceived in her Womb by

(*b*) Isa. viii. 14. "Therefore the LORD himself shall give you  
" a Sign, Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and  
" shall call his Name Immanuel."



by the *Holy Ghost*, and that God was his Father. This was the Subject of the Dispute *Jesus* had with the Doctors; for the Youth boldly asserted before them, that whosoever should be found to be born of a pure Virgin without the Action of a Man must be acknowledged to be the Messiah. This confounded the Doctors, and they remained speechless, and *Jesus* came off Victor. However, *Joseph*, *Christ's* Father, during his Life would not suffer the Youth *Jesus* [who was at that Time learning the Carpenter's Art of him] to undertake the Messiahship; but he dying, *John* [*Christ's* Kinsman] and *Christ* consulted together how and in what Manner to atchieve this mighty Work. They both concluded it was only to be done by persuading the People, that he *Jesus* of *Nazareth* was the Messiah. *John* undertook this; and *Jesus* hearing, that great Multitudes flocked from all Parts, and received *John's* Doctrine with Gladness, came himself to see and hear *John*, when *John* took that Opportunity, as it had been agreed between them, of declaring to all the People then present, that *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, whom they then saw, was born in that miraculous Manner recorded by *St. Luke*; and that he was the Messiah, and was now come among them to declare himself their King and Deliverer. But it so happened, that while these Things were doing, certain Men, sent by *Herod*, the *Roman* Governor of *Judea*, came suddenly upon *John*, and apprehended him, casting him into Prison (i). Of which *Jesus* having a quick Intelligence crossed the River *Jordan*, [he might then be in the River fording of it, as was the Custom of those Times in passing Rivers and Currents of Water, before the Erection of Bridges] and fled into the *Wilderness*. But after some Time [*Ecclesiasticks* say, Forty Days] *Jesus* took Courage, repassed *Jordan*,  
D and

(i) *Matth.* iv. 12. *Mark* i. 14.

and went about the Towns and Villages declaring himself to be the Messiah. Which Conduct of our *Jesus's* being offensive to the *Roman* Magistracy, *He* was at last crucified for saying, *That he was the King of the Jews* (k). Now this was the Natural Messiah or *Christ* that appeared; and this is a natural Account of him. When he [this *Christ*] was dead, it was by his Disciples reported, that he would rise again on the third Day afterwards, and that he would after his Resurrection perform those mighty Things he had promised to do for the *Jewish* Nation. It is said, and by some believed, [your Lordship believes *Christ* did rise again on the third (l) Day] that *Christ* did rise from the Dead on the third Day. Say, he did so; the Expectations of the Disciples were not answered thereby; though they earnestly, *very earnestly*, desired him to answer this Question, *Lord, wilt thou at this Time restore the Kingdom to Israel?* (m) I cannot take upon me to say, that I think *Christ's* Answer to this ardent Question was either genteel or civil; but it is, it must be owned, evasive, *It is not for you to know the Times or the Seasons, which the Father hath put in his own Power, &c.*

Immediately after our *Jesus* had thus, as it were, ungratefully used his Disciples, ready to make him a King, he disappeared from them; and it was thereupon given out by certain Men, that he [*Jesus*] was ascended into Heaven. To keep up still the Expectation of a Messiah, a Restorer of the Kingdom of *Israel*, they taught, That this same *Jesus*, *which is now in your Sight taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come, in like Manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven* (n).

Thus

(k) Matth. xxvii. 11, 29, 37. (l) See, *The Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, published by the Bishop of London. (m) Acts i. 6, 7. (n) Ibid. i. 11.

Thus stood *Natural Christianity* at the Time of the supposed Ascension of *Jesus of Nazareth*. And now arose a general Expectation, among all the Disciples, that *Christ* would shortly descend from Heaven, and that he would come with Power and great Glory to restore the Kingdom to *Israel*. And it so happened, or it was reported, after the Ascension, that *Christ* appeared to his Disciples, when they were met together, on the first Day of the Week, which Ecclesiasticks say, laid the Foundation of the *Christian Sabbath*. This, however, occasioned the *Christians* to assemble together at first on that Day, they supposing that *Christ* would certainly shortly appear, and that his Appearance would be on that Day. This Doctrine, the immediate second Appearance of *Christ*, and the wonderful Things related of him, created an Order of People, who continually went about *Judea, Galilee, Syria, Asia*, and the most distant Regions, preaching and teaching this temporal Expectation, and declaring in what Manner he would reward his Followers when he came. These continued to be the Doctrines of *Natural Christianity* till the Opening of the Fourth Century, which brings me to my second Particular, *viz.*

*Secondly*, To shew in what Manner *Spiritual* [or rather *Artificial*] *Christianity* obtained.

Now, my Lord, this *Natural Christianity*; that is, this Running of certain Persons, *illiterate Persons*, up and down the *Roman Empire* preaching and teaching, that *Jesus of Nazareth*, who was, as they confidently, *very confidently*, affirmed, ascended into Heaven, would shortly, *very shortly*, come again, pull down the Power of the *Romans*, and restore the Kingdom to *Israel*, naturally drew on the Believers, *i. e.* the *Christians*, one Persecution after another, to the Number of *Ten*. To recite the Number of silly,

very silly, Men and Women who suffered for this temporal Expectation, [this Belief that *Jesus of Nazareth* would descend again from Heaven] and the many Cruelties, Torments, and sundry Kinds of Death they died, with the many Miracles and Wonders, &c. said to be performed by them, through the Course of Three Hundred Years, would fill several Volumes. But at length, this Scene of Persecution ceased; and this, my Lord, happened on the Invention of *Spiritual* or *Artificial Christianity*. I have already hinted what *Spiritual Christianity* is, I am only now to describe in what Manner it was introduced.

The Fathers or Leaders of the *Christians*, perceiving the Approach of *Constantine* to the Rule of the *Roman Empire*, on the long expected Death of *Constantius* his Father; the Holy Fathers, *Helena*, the Wife of *Constantius* and Mother of *Constantine*, and *Constantine* jointly contrived out of *Natural Christianity*, or the immediate Expectation of *Christ*, to fabricate what has since been called, *The Christian Religion*. But prior to this, we ought here to note, in what Manner *Eusebius*, Pope *Sylvester*, and other Bishops of the Church, wrought on the Mind and Ambition of *Constantine*, in Order to procure him to be a *Christian*, or rather [for he was not a *Christian* (o)] to tolerate and protect the *Christians*. And this I shall give your Lordship and the candid Reader, in the Words of a *Manuscript* (p), which a Gentleman

(o) *Constantine*, our Ecclesiastical Historians say, was not baptized till a little before his Death. He remained all his Life *Roman Sovereign Pontiff*, or High Priest and Universal Protector of all the *Heathens*. Altars were erected to him, and he was venerated as the Tutelar Deity of the *Roman Empire*. But marching against the *Persians* he fell sick and died at *Nicomedia*, a City of *Bithynia*, after having received or demanded Baptism, in *A. D.* 337.

(p) I have bequeathed this valuable Manuscript, entitled, *Se-veral*



Gentleman lately deceased left me, wherein he shews in what Manner *Constantine* was imposed on, and brought into *Christianity*.

We have seen, says our *Author*, by what Means the *Old Testament*, with all its Doctrines came to be received as the primary Part of the Canon of the *Christian* Faith, namely, by this one Discovery of *St. Chrysostom*, viz. That *Christ* had not abolished the Divine Right of the Ministers of Religion to *Tithes*; it will be necessary also to see what led to the Adoption of all the *Heathen* Principles into the *Christian* Faith and Practice. And this will be best done, in a short Dialogue between the Empress *Helena*, *Constantine* the Great, Pope *Sylvester*, *Eusebius* of *Nicomedia*, and some other *Christian* Bishops. Which happened thus :

*Helena* to *Constantine*. My dear Son, thy Father *Constantius* is dead, and you did promise me, that if ever you came to the Rule of the Empire, you would favour the *Christians*, and grant them a Toleration.

*Constantine*. In this unsettled State of the Empire, whilst *Maxentius* is up in Arms, how is it possible to be done ; besides, dear Mother, though the *Christians*

*veral Observations Historical and Critical on Sacred and Profane Writers*, to the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of *St. Paul's*, *London*, to be deposited in the Library of the said Cathedral, for the Use of all the Clergy of the Diocese of *London*, and all others resorting thereto. It is curiously wrote on strong Imperial Paper, in a Volume upon a Roller, according to the Manner of the Ancients. It is in Width one Foot ; the Lines are about seven Inches long, and the Marginal Notes, which are wrote in small Characters, are about four Inches. The Whole is divided into Feet and Inches on the Backside, and by the Help of an Index annexed, any Thing contained in the Work may be readily found. It vies with any Manuscript, though not for Antiquity, I have seen, either in the Libraries Abroad, or in those of *London*, *Oxford* and *Cambridge*.

*stians* are now very quiet and peaceable Subjects, yet as they are continually in Expectation of the Appearance of that great Prince, whom they call the Messiah, and who will, at his Coming, they likewise say and expect, rule the whole Earth; they have been looked upon, ever since their Rise, by the Senate, as Enemies to the *Roman* State. You know, that this their Doctrine has brought upon them from Time to Time the many Persecutions, Imprisonments and Martyrdoms they so vainly and ostentatiously boast of. Besides, it has been by a seeming Detestation of these Principles, that both You and I have preserved our Lives hitherto. And it is upon the very Account of our supposed private Attachment to the *Christian* Cause, that we are at this Time opposed by *Maxentius* and his Party, and I have but Yesterday received Advice that *Licinius* hath joined him.

*Helena.* To these Things, my Son, I can give you no direct or positive Answer. I know the *Christians* have been persecuted, harrassed, and Thousands of them put to Death, and I always thought innocently; but as for your Schemes of Policy, I leave these Things with you; but it is Pity moves me, to see such worthy Persons, as I think them, continually under the Lash of the Laws, and exposed to the Fury and Cruelty of every barbarous and tyrannical Person. But let me beg this of you, my dear Son, that holy *Eusebius*, Father and Bishop of *Nicomedia*, on the Behalf of the *Christians*, may stand before You.

*Constantine.* It can be to no Purpose; I have no Time to spare; and my Spies have but now brought me Intelligence, that many *Christians* are up in Arms. These very People, who from the Beginning have despised Principalities and Powers, and who would never willingly pay their Taxes, nor fight

fight in the Disputes of Princes, are perhaps now in Arms, and will take this Opportunity, during the Distraction of Things, to set up their Messiah, who they say will rule the People under the four Corners of Heaven.

*Helena.* It is true, my Son, the *Christians* are under Arms; *Sylvester* and *Eusebius* have sent unto me a Messenger with this Letter, which, if Your Highness will read, I believe will give you the Cause thereof, and at the same Time entire Satisfaction.

*Constantine* takes from his Mother the Letter, and reads: "To the Divine, Holy, and Illustrious  
"Empress *Helena*, Mother of the Sacred, Pious,  
"and Immortal Governor of the World, the Renowned *Constantine*; *Sylvester* of Rome, the Servant of the Faithful, and the Bishops and holy  
"Fathers that are with him, send Greeting: After  
"solemn Prayer and the Invocation of the *Holy Ghost* to direct our Counsels, a Voice was heard  
"to say, Oppose the Tyrant *Maxentius*, who seeketh to destroy the Members of *Christ*, who shall  
"live and dwell with me and him to all Eternity.  
"*Eusebius* will be shortly with You, most noble  
"Princes, who will explain to You more fully the  
"Mind of Us and of the *Holy Ghost*. Our Prayers  
"we daily offer up at the Throne of Grace for the  
"Safety and Prosperity of You and Your Son.  
"Those who now are lifted under *Christ's* Banner,  
"which is the Sign of the Cross, are more than  
"One Hundred Thousand." — Well! says *Constantine*, I will see *Eusebius* when he comes.

*Helena.* My Son, *Eusebius* is without.

*Constantine.* Order *Eusebius* to come in.

*Eusebius.* All hail great Monarch of the World! *Sylvester*, and all the Bishops of *Christ* have sent me unto you, to declare their Attachment to your Person, and to defend thy Right to the Rule of the  
Empire,

Empire, against the Tyrant *Maxentius* and all Opposers; and to desire of thee to appoint Captains and Rulers over the Hosts of *Christ*, which they the Bishops have raised, and which the *Christians* will maintain, to assert your just Cause.

*Constantine*. I gratefully accept your Offer in this Time of great Distress, and I will give proper Orders thereto. Only this, the Troops shall be no Burthen to the *Christians*, I will appoint them an Allowance out of the publick Granaries. But as for you, *Eusebius*, I lay my Commands upon you to attend my Person, that you may direct my Counsels.

*Eusebius*. I shall readily obey.

*Helena* to *Eusebius*. I have appointed for you, holy Father, an Apartment near our Royal Person. I have long wanted to learn from you what the *Holy Ghost* has taught you the Bishops from Time to Time; the Emperor reproached me but the other Day with the Absurdity of the *Christian* Principles and Doctrines to the Safety of the Empire.

*Eusebius*. He will no more reproach *Christianity*, when he hears in what Manner the *Holy Ghost* has explained to Us the *Gospel* of *Christ*.

*Helena*. I long the Emperor should be satisfied in all these Particulars.

*Eusebius*. That shall be done, divine Princess, as soon as we have routed and destroyed the Enemy of *Constantine* and *Christ*, the Tyrant *Maxentius*, and established your Son on the Throne. In Order to which, great Princess, I must not only beg your Assistance, but also your Silence; for the Success of this Battle dependeth, as the *Holy Ghost* has informed Us, on the Courage and Bravery, not only of *Constantine*, but particularly of the *Christians*.

*Helena*. Holy Father, I make no Doubt of that; and if I can contribute any Thing towards the Accomplishment



complishment of the Designs of the *Holy Ghost*, I shall not be wanting.

*Eusebius.* The *Holy Ghost*, great Princess, appeared unto me, in the Visions of the Night, and commanded me, saying, Tell *Constantine* that his Standard shall be the Cross of *Christ*. Here, divine Princess, is the Form thereof, and this is the *Motto* which I received from the *Holy Ghost*, *Hoc Signo vinces*.

*Helena.* I am, holy Father, greatly pleased with this Sign or Standard. What a much more noble Figure does it shew than the *Roman Eagle*! Shall I recommend this to my Son for a Standard?

*Eusebius.* No, great Princess; the *Holy Ghost* hath appointed the Way in which to convey the Thought to the divine Emperor. *Christ* will this Night fill the Pavillion wherein the Emperor sleepeth with his Almighty Glory, and display to him in a Vision a Representation of this very Cross; and then, on the Morrow, when the Emperor shall relate his Vision unto Us we will advise him to make the Cross of *Christ* the *Roman Standard*. Hence it will come to pass, that Thousands and Thousands of *Christians* will fight manfully under it, to the Overthrow, not only of *Maxentius*, *Licinius* and their Adherents, but also of all future Opposers of the divine Emperor, and of the *Christian Faith*.

*Helena.* Holy Father, I shall always lend my Hand to accomplish the Works of the *Holy Ghost*.

*Eusebius.* All that I beg of your divine Highness is, that you will take Care, that while I am this Night about the Royal Chamber, I be not disturbed by the Intervention of any Person.

*Helena.* I will take upon me that Office.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Eusebius.* The Operations of the *Holy Ghost* have succeeded; I heard the divine Emperor, in a great Ecstasy, and I heard also his heavenly Voice repeat

three times these Words, *Hoc Signo vinces*. Please, celestial Princess, to retire, and I will away, and repose myself till the Morning.

*Helena*. Heaven shield you, holy Father !

*Constantine* to *Helena*. I have longed, dear Mother, for the Approach of Day ; since the first Cockcrow I have not been able to sleep. I saw, in the Visions of the Night, a bright, glorious and luminous Cross, whereon were written these Words, *Hoc Signo vinces* ; and I heard a heavenly Voice, which said, Bear this before thee. Have you seen *Eusebius* this Morning ?

*Helena*. He walketh in the Garden, and is preparing himself for the Mattin.

*Constantine* goes to *Eusebius* accompanied by *Helena*. Tells *Eusebius* what had happened.

*Eusebius*. It is of the *Holy Ghost*, whose Servant mighty Monarch thou art, and who has descended from Heaven, and hath condescended to teach and direct you what you shall do. May you follow his Advice !

*Constantine*. I will change the Standard of the Empire from the *Eagle* to the *Cross*.

*Eusebius* and *Helena*. In that you will do well, in as much as you will therein follow the Dictates of the Divine Will.

*Helena* to *Eusebius*. I have viewed the Troops this Day ; and the new Standard cuts a fine Figure ! what brave Men the *Christians* seem to be !

*Eusebius*. They are, most noble Princess, all animated by the *Holy Ghost* ?

*Helena*. Pray, holy Father ! what is meant by being animated by the *Holy Ghost* ?

*Eusebius*. The *Holy Ghost* being God can shed his Influence and Grace over a Hundred-thousand as well as one. He will give those Men such Success, Resolution and Courage, that on the Day of Battle they will vanquish all their Enemies.

*Helena*.

*Helena.* And will the *Holy Ghost* do the same by the *Heathen Troops*, in the Service of my Son?

*Eusebius.* He will; if we and the whole Body of the *Christians* beseech him so to do.

*Helena.* Then I will pray to *Him*, and I will desire *Sylvester* to pray also.

*Eusebius.* — To-morrow is the important Day; and this Night *Constantine* will see *Christ*, who is the Son of GOD, if the Visions of the Night be not disturbed by the Wicked and Unbelieving. I will pray for the Success of the Emperor against *Maxentius* this Night at the Emperor's Chamber-door.

*Constantine* to *Helena* and *Eusebius.* I saw in my Sleep last Night *Jesus*, the King of the *Christians*, and a Voice was heard to say, Make a Standard in the Form of a Cross, for by that shall you overcome all your Enemies.

*Eusebius* to *Helena.* Let us animate the *Christian Troops* with the Emperor's Relation.

*Helena.* I will undertake that; — I will go into the Camp and declare it; and I will excite the Emperor, Senators and Nobles to do the same.

*Constantine.* The *Christian Troops* have behaved valiantly, they have sustained the Burthen of the Day; they have defeated *Maxentius*; totally routed him, the Judgments of GOD fell upon him in his Flight; he died by the Fall of a Bridge, and the Victory is compleat. And this Success I attribute to *Christ*, the Cross, and the Bravery of the *Christians*; wherefore I ordain, that, in Remembrance of this Victory, the Cross, as the Standard of the *Roman Empire*, be set up, in the Midst of the City of *Rome*, with this Inscription; “ By this salutary Sign,  
“ which is the Mark of the true Power, I have  
“ delivered your City from the Yoke of Tyranny,  
“ and established your Senate and People in their

“ ancient Splendor. I therefore ordain, that all do  
“ worship *Christ*, and venerate the Cross.”

*Helena* to *Eusebius*. Holy Father, did you see the  
Battle ?

*Eusebius*. No ; Celestial Princess, I was imploring  
the Assistance of the *Holy Ghost* all the Time by  
Prayer.

*Helena*. Do you know this Man ? He says, his  
Name is *Etherius*.

*Eusebius*. Yes ; most noble Princess ! But how  
came he with you ?

*Helena*. He says, He is a *Christian*, but he seems  
to me, from what he has uttered, to be an Enemy  
to the Cause ; but hear him yourself, when the Em-  
peror comes ; for he insists strenuously upon speak-  
ing to the Emperor.

*Eusebius*. If that could be avoided, it might be  
better ; for *Etherius* is tainted with the *Arian* He-  
resy.

*Helena*. Speak *Etherius*, you have your Free-  
dom.

*Etherius*. I came, *Helena*, to speak the Truth ; I  
pretend to no Inspiration ; but the *Christians* have by  
fighting exposed all their Descendants to the Curse  
thereof ; *Christian* shall cut off and destroy *Christian*,  
and of War there shall be no End. *Eusebius* know-  
eth, that this has been a received Principle from the  
Beginning of *Christianity* till this Time, that no  
Believer was to bear Arms, until *Jesus* should come  
a second Time.

*Eusebius*. But the *Holy Ghost* appeared unto me,  
and assured me, that *Christian* Men might lawfully,  
at the Command of the Magistrate, bear Arms and  
fight in the Wars.

*Etherius*. The Mistake is committed, and there is  
no Retraction. But there hath fell of the *Christians*

at



at the Battle of *Pontemolle* nigh Fifty-thousand, and future *Christians* shall have Occasion to lament this Precedent.

*Eusebius*. But the *Holy Ghost* told me, that He would raise them all to Life again, at the Resurrection of the last Day.

*Etherius*. Thou art *Eusebius* of *Nicomedia* ; thou didst deny *Christ* under the Persecution of *Maximian* with divers others ; and now behold you will pervert *Christianity*, and expose the future *Christians* by thy Schemes to Slavery, Death and Destruction. You will make the Gospel of *Christ* a State-Maxim, and its Doctrines the Engines of State-Policy. — I cannot bear it.

*Helena* hereupon, who had a great Respect for *Eusebius*, ordered *Etherius* to depart immediately, and not to be seen at *Rome* till sent for, under Pain of her Displeasure.

*Constantine* to *Helena*, *Eusebius*, and others. I have with the Assistance of *Christ* and his Disciples, and under the Favour of the Cross, vanquished *Licinius*, &c. and restored Peace to the Empire ; and now I will set about to draw off the People from *Paganism* to the *Christian* Faith.

*Helena*. A noble Resolution !

*Eusebius*. And worthy of the Divine Governor of the World.

*Constantine*. I will on a certain Day, *Eusebius*, confer with *Sylvester*, you, and other holy Fathers, in the Presence of the Empress *Helena* ; and be ye prepared to answer all Questions concerning your Religion, I shall then put to you ; I have drawn up several.

*Eusebius*. I will summon *Sylvester* and divers other holy Bishops to attend the Conference.

*Constantine* to the *Synod*. Holy Fathers, I have had for many Years a great Regard to the *Christian* Faith,  
but

but as I am not able to understand the Drift and Design of many of its Doctrines, I have desired this private Conference. And I judge I cannot err since *Jesus* hath appeared unto me, and the *Holy Spirit*, I am sure, hath granted me his Assistance. How do you prove, from your Scriptures, that *Christian Men* are obliged by the Doctrines and Precepts of *Christ* to bear Arms at the Command of the Magistrate, and fight in the Defence of Him, Themselves, and the Commonwealth?

*Synod.* We thus answer: *Christ* paid Tribute to *Cesar*, and there is not throughout all the sacred Writings relative to *Christianity*, which we receive for canonical, one Prohibition to the contrary; and therefore what is not forbidden is certainly allowed.

*Constantine.* It does seem to me, that the Primitive *Christians* looked on *Christ* as a temporal Prince, and so they did within twenty Years past. When do you expect his Second Coming?

*Synod.* We do not expect to see *Christ* till the Consummation of all Things, when he shall come to judge the World in Righteousness.

*Constantine.* Did not the *Christians* teach not long since that *Christ* would suddenly appear, and raise to Life all the *Christians* that were dead, to compose his great Army?

*Synod.* Yes, they did; but the *Holy Ghost* has appeared unto several of us, and hath explained all those Passages of Scripture, which relate thereto, of a future Resurrection at the End of the World. And hereupon *Athanasius* produced his Creed, which greatly pleased the Emperor.

The Conferences were continued from Day to Day, and the Explanation of every Doctrine in the spiritual and future Sense, and the daily and hourly Invention of new Doctrines, pleased the Emperor. Revelations of the Divine Will by Impulses,

pulses, Appearances of the *Holy Ghost*, of *Christ*, of the Apostles, of Saints and Martyrs were nightly forged, and daily published; the Emperor himself was a Visionary; (Policy induced him to tolerate *Christianity*;) *Helena* was such, and so were most of the Bishops; and, in short, it even became a Fashion to pretend to Inspiration.

*Constantine* to the *Synod*. Holy Fathers, I will here relate to you what has hitherto been my Opinion of *Christianity*, till my Mind was illuminated. I looked on *Jesus of Nazareth*, whom you now stile *God the Son*, the eternal Father, &c. to be a mere Man, the first *Christians* looked on him as such, and only believed him to be the Messiah, one who would restore the Kingdom and Rule to the Children of *Israel*. This is, as I always took it, the fundamental Article of the *Christian Faith*, on which all the rest have been since built. I therefore desire to know, what are your Thoughts concerning this first and principal Article of the *Christian Faith* at this Time.

*Synod*. Divine Emperor, we have for your Satisfaction drawn up a brief Explanation of all the Doctrines of *Christianity*, as dictated to Us by the *Holy Ghost*, and likewise we have added some of those which we have lately received by Divine Revelation.

Here the Bishops gave *Constantine* the first Formula, Body of *Christian Divinity*, or Confession of Faith which had ever appeared.

*Constantine* is heard to remark. *Christ* will immediately appear, and reward his Disciples by giving them a temporal Kingdom. The spiritual Meaning is, *Christ* will come, at the End of the World, in the Clouds of Glory, and will call all the Dead before him to Judgment, and he will reward every one according to his Works. Ay, says *Constantine*,

*Constantine*, this is something ; there is a wide Difference between the Present and the Future. Some have taught, that the World is eternal ;—but, however, if the World should continue as long as it has, or but One Hundred Years, the Coming of *Christ* cannot affect me ! — Well ! farther, *Christ* died for the Sins of Men !—*Christ* is our Redeemer ! —He sitteth at the Right Hand of God, the Father Almighty, making Intercession for Us ! — He (*Christ*) is the Lamb of God ! — He is *God the Son* ! —He was without Sin ! — His Blood was shed for the Remission of Sins, &c. &c. and &c. too numerous (and ridiculous !) to be recited.

*Constantine* to the *Synod*. Holy Fathers ! I approve these Doctrines ; and, I will, as you desire, shortly summon a General Council at *Nice* to establish all the fundamental Articles of the *Christian* Faith.

Before this Period (*viz.* the *Constantine*) the *Christians* of the three first Centuries never did, nor never would interest themselves in the Wars of contending Princes ; — none of them (they declared) would fight till their Master *Jesus* appeared.

But to get rid of Persecution, to curry Favour with *Constantine*, the Fathers or Bishops of the Church [or rather of the *Christians*, for the Church was but just forming, or licking into Shape] tacked about, and taught their Adherents, that they had mistaken the true Meaning of *Christ's* Words, the Words of the Angels, and the Words of the Apostle *St. Paul*, and that the *Holy Ghost* had since instructed them to declare, that *Christ* would not personally appear until the End of the World, wherefore they advised their Disciples to arm, and to list themselves under *Constantine*, to aid and assist him against his Competitor *Maxentius*, promising them, that if *Constantine* became Victor, then would they,  
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in all Parts of the *Roman* Empire (which; at that Time, had well nigh extended itself to the Conquest of the whole known World) be free, and be no longer subject to Death as Rebels and seditious Persons:

Upon this *Constantine* pretended to be a *Christian*, became himself a Visionary, asserted confidently to all, that *Jesus* did appear unto him, and that *He* ordered him to lay aside the *Roman* Standard, and to take in lieu thereof; the Representation of the Cross, on which *Jesus* had been crucified. And *Constantine* told *Eusebius* (who, by the Way, also was an Enthusiast and a great Visionary, for he credited the Emperor) that *Jesus* promised him thereon Victory over *Maxentius*. *Constantine* did so; and the *Christians* from all Parts (many from *Britain*) flocked to this Standard, gave by their Valour Victory to *Constantine*, and a total Overthrow to *Maxentius*. Whereupon *Constantine* ordained immediately, that the Cross should be held as holy and sacred; and that from henceforth it should not be used in the Punishment of Malefactors. *Helena* the Empress built a Church to the Honour of the Holy Cross; and hence soon arose, the Worship of the Cross. The *Christians*; from this Time continued to fill *Constantine's* Army, and with unparalleled Success and Bravery, they, at length, procured *Constantine* sole Emperor.

During these Transactions, the Ecclesiastical Fathers and Politicians were hard at Work, and they so trimmed their Doctrines, and explained away whatever had before been offensive in their Faith, or Practice, that, at length, *Constantine* began openly to encourage them, and he gave them Power to assemble themselves together; and he ordered them to draw up a Narrative concerning *Christ* and his Doctrine, and of the many Miracles and Wonders he had wrought.

The Emperor assigned these Fathers a Place where they should meet, in Order to compile this *Narrative*; which was an Apartment in the Royal Palace. The Assembly was often favoured with the Company of the Empress *Helena*, with that of *Constantine* himself; and likewise with that of divers of the Nobility.

After some Time, the holy Fathers had collected together such an infinite Number of *Narratives* said to be wrote also by the same Person, and some full of such Absurdities, such lying Miracles and Wonders, that it was upon mature Deliberation, and the Invocation of the *Holy Ghost*, determined, that there should be but *Four Narratives* authenticated, viz. of *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke* and *John*; but then the Mischief was, there were so many of a Sort of the three first, that it was very difficult to hit upon the right;—for, it seems, the *Holy Ghost* had inspired almost every eminent Man, every Sect, and every Enthusiast [of which the World then abounded] to write a *Narrative* of the Birth, Transactions and Miracles of *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, and to prefix thereto the Name of one of the *Evangelists*. But chiefly there were more *Narratives* that bore the Name of *Matthew* than of all the rest. There were many of *Mark* and *Luke*; but there were few or none of *John*, besides that we have; only it must be noted, that the *Narrative* (now *Gospel*) of *St. John* has been greatly enlarged and improved since it was first said to be wrote by *St. John*, or rather by that impudent Visionary and Enthusiast *St. Papias* (q), who was his Disciple.

But

(q) On the receiving the Gospel of *St. John* as Canonical there arose in the Church, certain Hereticks who rejected that and the *Revelation* as the Reveries and Forgeries of *Papias*; and who were thereupon, by the Orthodox, termed *Abgi*, or Persons who denied the Divinity of the *Logos*, or *Christ*.

But notwithstanding the great Care and Industry taken by the *Constantine* Fathers to expunge from the *Four Gospels*, a great Multitude of the most idle and vague Stories concerning the Miracles and Actions of *Jesus of Nazareth*; yet, my Lord, it has so happened, the more is the Pity! that some of the most ridiculous and absurd have still been handed down to us, and are, at present, contained in the said *Four Gospels*. As for Instance, *Christ's* Walking on the Sea as on firm Land; His Transubstantiating of Water into real Wine at the Marriage in *Cana*; His Telling the Woman of *Samaria* her humourous Fortune; His Feeding Five Thousand Men, besides Women and Children, with five Loaves and two Fishes, which Food was so encreased, after this great Number of People were satiated, that the Disciples gathered up of the Fragments twelve Baskets full (r); His Fasting Forty Days and Forty Nights; His Standing upon the Pinnacle of the Temple, being sat thereon by the Devil: And, lastly, His wonderful Incarnation, Resurrection and Ascension.

The Spirit of Trimming, my Lord, kept its Place, and the holy Fathers introduced at this Time into the *Gospels*, all those Expressions (Verses (s) or Paragraphs they are now) so agreeable to worldly Power and Grandeur. One Instance will serve for all; to wit, that celebrated one of *Christ*, who tho' a King and a God is represented as paying of Tri-  
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(r) Matth. xiv. 19, 20, 21. (s) The Books of the *Old and New Testament* were not divided into Chapters, Paragraphs and Verses, till some Time in the Thirteenth Century, when *Hugo de Sancto Caro*, a *Burgundine* Monk first found it out. Which small or little Divisions of the Sacred Text are judiciously censured by Mr. *Locke* in his Preface to his Paraphrase on the *Romans*, as tending to reduce the Scriptures into a Collection of Sentences, Aphorisms, Sayings and Proverbs; and, in many Places, by their Inconnection, destroying the very Sense and Design of the Author.

bute to the *Roman Power*. It is wholly inconsistent with the Character of *Jesus of Nazareth* to pay Tribute, regarding him as the predestinated Messiah and Restorer of the *Jewish Commonwealth*. But so the *Constantine Fathers* were pleased to say, that *Christ* commanded, *Render unto Cæsar the Things that are Cæsar's, &c.* There are many other Passages which were inserted at the same Time; all which were inserted to please *Constantine* and *Helena*, who, as I said before, were often present in the Synod. At this Time also, all those Passages which represent *Christ* as speaking of himself as *God*, were inserted. As for the many Miracles said to be wrought by *Jesus*, they had been introduced about the Time, the *Christians* attempted to persuade the *Roman Senate* to inroll *Jesus* among their Gods.

The *Constantine Fathers*, having at length compiled out of the Multitude of different Narratives, the *Four Narratives* of *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke* and *John*, (though those *Four* in After-time received a great Number of Additions and Improvements) they were so happy as to fix on the Word *Εὐαγγέλιον*, that is, the *Glad Tiding* (or *Gospel*) for the Title or Name of these Narratives. Hence the *Gospel* (or the *Glad Tiding*) of *St. Matthew*; — of *St. Mark*; — of *St. Luke*; and — of *St. John*. *Constantine*, *Helena* and others having revised these *Four Gospels* found them altogether agreeable. The Emperor finding, that the holy Fathers had adjourned their Expectation of the immediate Appearance of *Christ* to take on him Universal Monarchy, to the End of the World, and that *Christ* was, during the intermediate Space, to reign in the Hearts of the Faithful by his Grace, and that that Grace was to influence all the Followers of *Jesus* to be obedient to him the Emperor, and to fight for him, he was entirely satisfied; and thereupon, as a farther Mark of his Favour, he appointed that



that a General Council of all the *Christian* Fathers or Bishops, from all Parts of the *Roman* Empire, should be held at *Nice*. My Lord, I have read somewhere, that several *British* Bishops (among whom was *Restitutus* then Bishop of *Londan*, one of your Lordship's Predecessors) were present at this Council. Here the Fathers of the Church assembled fixed the first Canon of Scripture, and which then consisted only of the *Four Gospels*; and which, also, as is hinted before, were not quite so large as they are now.

Now these *Four Gospels* continued many Years, after this first Council of *Nice*, which was held in the Year *Three-hundred-twenty-five*, to be the only Rule of Faith. But as Ecclesiasticks have always discovered that their Works of Revelation and Inspiration still want Amendment, or the Aid of farther Revelation and Inspiration, this Book of the *Four Gospels* did not last to be the only Rule of the *Christian* Faith above Sixty or Seventy Years. In Process of Time there arose in the Church divers great and valuable Men, such were *Cbrysofom*, *Theodoret*, *Eusebius*, *Athanasius*, *Cyril*, and many others; but our Subject directeth us here to speak particularly of St. *Cbrysofom*. This Man was born a *Pagan*, but was early converted to, and initiated into *Christianity*. He arose from being a Deacon to the Archiepiscopacy of one of the largest Provinces in the whole World. In this Station, he saw, with the greatest Concern, a vast Number of Bishops, Priests and Deacons almost starving amidst the greatest Diligence and Industry, *i. e.* the Pains they took to go about from House to House, from Town to Town, and from City to City, preaching, teaching and explaining the Mysteries of the Gospel, which were then chiefly these four; *viz.* the wonderful Incarnation of *Jesus of Nazareth*, his Resurrection, his Ascension, and his Coming again at the End of the World to Judgment.

**Judgment.** The Poverty and unsettled Maintenance of the Clergy, *Cbrysoftom* took to Heart, and reflecting upon the Writings of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, he soon found out, as he said, that *Christ* had not abrogated the Divine Right of Tithes. Hereupon, the Saint concluded, that if he could restore and establish this Doctrine as divine, then he should thereby procure to the Ministers of the Gospel a handsome and regular Maintenance. This would, *Cbrysoftom* also concluded, bring into the Church (as it afterwards did) many both *Pagan* and *Jewish* Families.

Now this was not to be done our Saint knew by his preaching up the *Old Testament* Writings, or as they were then called, *The Scriptures of Moses and the Prophets*. That would not do; but he began with recommending the *Acts of the Apostles*, the *Epistles* of *St. Paul*, and the *Catholick Epistles* as a proper Appendage to the *Four Gospels*. It happened very luckily, that these Writings were a Comment on, or Recommendation of, most of the Writings of *Moses* and the *Prophets*. The first Step that was taken to introduce and establish the Doctrines, the *Acts* and the *Epistles* contained, was to persuade the Bishop of *Rome*, whom *Constantine* had some Years before, in the Person of *Sylvester*, made Sovereign *Christian* Pontiff, or High Priest, of the whole World, to insert into the *Daily Service*, and cause to be read certain little Portions of these Scriptures. These Portions were chiefly on the Subjects of Obedience to Magistrates both Ecclesiastical and Civil; the Prophecies applicable to *Christ*, &c. and particularly relative to *Tithes*. This wise and judicious Proceeding soon had the desired Effect; it brought these *Scriptures* into such Credit with the People, that, at length, the holy Bishops met in a Council, and joined to the *Four Gospels*, the *Acts of the Apostles*, written by *Luke*, all the *Epistles* of *Paul*, *Peter*, &c. the whole *New Testament*,

*Testament*, as we have it now, except the *Apocalypse*, and some Additions to the several *Gospels* and *Epistles*, of which we shall have Occasion to make mention hereafter. A short Time, my Lord, produced the *BIBLE*; it was soon after decreed, that the Writings of *Moses* and the Prophets, should, in the Canon of Scripture, preceed the *Four Gospels*. Hence, on the Score of Revelation, these two Parts obtained the Denomination of, *The Old and New Wills or Testaments*. But when this was done, there was no Connection between the *Old* and the *New Testament*, wherefore the Church thought proper to make a *Genealogy of Christ*, and to insert it at the Beginning of the *Gospel* according to *St. Matthew*. So that this Addition, as innumerable others were, was made full three Hundred and Fifty Years after *Matthew* is said to have written his *Gospel*.

Thus, my Lord, were the Books of the *New Testament* fabricated, all but the *Apocalypse*, which was introduced and added to the *Gospels* and *Epistles* in the following Manner. It was at the General Council of *Constantinople*, held in the Year 397, when *Theodoret*, *Eusebius* and others were of Opinion, that the Book of the *Revelation* of *St. John*, which had been conveyed to the Church then nigh three Hundred Years by *Papias*, who was the Disciple of *St. John*, was worthy, and ought to be annexed to the Canon of the Holy Scripture. *Theodoret* declared, that he had examined it, and that the *Holy Spirit* had directed him, to make the Proposition. This was followed by *Eusebius*, and divers other holy Fathers; but as the Motion was sudden, and the rest of the Council had not duly considered of this Affair, it was proposed by those who had hitherto looked on this Book as apocryphal, to take some Time to examine into the Genuineness of it; but *Theodoret* said, there could be no Occasion for that, since he was sure  
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he had seen the *Holy Ghost*, the preceeding Night; and who had directed him to propose it, and he said, and positively affirmed, that the *Holy Ghost* informed him; that it was written by immediate Inspiration from him; then the Zealots for the Divinity of *Christ* and the *Holy Ghost* cried out, Put it to the Vote, Whether the *Apocalypse* of St. *John* written by the *Holy Ghost* should be added to the *Gospels* and the *Epistles*? It passed in the Affirmative, and with loud Acclamations.

Here we see, my Lord, the Methods then used to establish the several Parts of Scripture; all which *Epistles* and the *Revelation* of St. *John* were introduced, if not purposely forged and invented, to serve some Ecclesiastical Scheme, and then carried in Councils, and established as the Word of God, in some such like Manner I have already mentioned.

Thus, my Lord, the holy Ecclesiasticks of the Fourth Century introduced *Spiritual* (or rather *Artificial*) *Christianity*; and thus they imposed on the People of that Age, and on their Successors. Their Successors, the Bishops of *Rome*, carried on the Farce, and it would now take, more than a Volume, only to mention the many Doctrines and Articles of Faith they have substracted and divided their *Spiritual Christianity* into.

I need not here repeat to your Lordship, how these Impositions survived the *Constantine* Age, lived and flourished, and had their Completion in the Church in the Fifteenth Century, when the Clergy not content with one Place of future Punishment, at the End of the World, invented the Doctrine of an intermediate State, which one of our sagacious Popes stiled, *Purgatory*.

But *Henry* the Eighth, my Lord, coming to the Throne of these Kingdoms, here in *England* first abolished the Supremacy of the Pope, and broke the  
Union



Union of the Catholick Church. On which the *Papists* affirmed, that the *Holy Spirit* had left *England*; but they were mistaken, for the *Protestants* would not part with the Assistance, Influence and Guidance of the *Holy Ghost*: And they did then and do now assert, and your Lordship believes, and so do I sincerely, that the Church of *England*, as by Law established, has as much Right to the Aid, Assistance and Influence of the *Holy Ghost* as ever the Church had in the Primitive Times. Accordingly, my Lord, your Lordship well knows, that the first Translators of the *Bible* into *English*, and the Compilers of the *Common Prayer* confidently, *very confidently*, affirm, that the *Holy Ghost* assisted them in the Performance of those great Works. And in this *English* Translation (which, by the Way, has received since a thousand Alterations, Emendations, &c.) of the Scriptures, *Cranmer*, *Ridley* and others placed that *Infallibility* which they robbed his Holiness the *Pope* of. Thus, the *Bible* has ever since been the unerring Guide of *Protestants*; but the Divines among the *Protestants*, not willing entirely to trust *Infallibility* in the Letter, or written Word only, did after some Time think proper to help the Sense by writing Commentaries, Expositions and Glossaries thereon. Which Spirit or Knack of Expounding introduced the vast Number of Paraphrases, Comments, &c. (and Sects) which have since loaded *Protestant Christianity*; and at first laid the Foundation, and which hath also ever since supported the Spirit of *Sermonizing*, at which your Lordship has shewn us that you are as great an Adept as any one that has gone before you! And I humbly judge, your Lordship, like other Enthusiasts, presumes, that the *Holy Ghost* assisted you in compiling your *Discourses*, when it is my Opinion, *my very bumble Opinion*, that your Lordship was directed and instigated to write them, from

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the very same Motives, the G—r sells his Plumbs, and the M——n his Milk.

But to return. I hope your Lordship will excuse this long Digression; it was, I assure You and the Reader, for the Sake of the Truth; the great Regard I have for which doth appear, I am confident, in every preceeding Line, and I do here pawn my Honour it will be transparent in every succeeding one, even to the last Page inclusive.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Fifth Position, *viz.*  
 “ Christ has given no Account of the Nature of  
 “ GOD, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Cer-  
 “ tainty of future Rewards and Punishments in ano-  
 “ ther Life after this.” *See Vol. I. p. 110.*

I must here ask your Lordship, Why did not *Christ* clear these Doubts? !!! You answer a few Lines lower in the same Page: “ Future Rewards, “ say you, and Punishments *Christ* has indeed fully “ asserted, [or the *Constantine* Fathers for him, by “ interpolating of the Scriptures] but as to the Na- “ ture or Manner of them, and the Soul's Existence “ in each State, he has left them involved in the “ same Intricacies in which he found them.” I be- lieve so! because concerning these Matters I hum- bly conceit *Jesus* or *Christ* knew just as much as ei- ther You or I do. Let me beg of your Lordship to prove and demonstrate, laying aside Revelation, which I look on as Ecclesiastical Juggle, that there is such an Essence as you call the *Soul*; and that it is immortal. And when that is done, which some imagine you can never do, then I will allow your Doctrine of eternal Rewards and Punishments (s).

Doctrines

(s) The Doctrines of future Rewards and Punishments, *i.e.* I mean of Heaven and Hell. The first Place was invented by the *Christian* Divines for one exceeding good Purpose; and it has answered the End, *viz.* to reward all those who should sound for the Clergy, Monasteries,

Doctrines invented and used in the same Sense our good Women do to Children, *Raw-Head-and-Bloody-Bones!* the *Black-Man*, meaning *Satan* and the *Devil!* &c. &c. &c.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Sixth Position, viz.  
 " The present unequal Distribution of Rewards and  
 " Punishments can be accounted for upon no other  
 " Foot than the Notions we have of God's Excel-  
 " lency and Perfections." *Vol. I. p. 113, 114.*

Who has made the present unequal Distribution of Rewards and Punishments in this Life? It is plain, your Lordship says, GOD has. But with your Leave I do here declare, that GOD did not make the present unequal Distribution of Rewards and Punishments; and because your Lordship would father that which is the Invention of Man upon the Almighty, I will tell the Reader who did it, and prove it to his Satisfaction, The Instance I shall bring will be from our own History and Constitution, and that will answer in the Government of all the Civilized Nations. Now those who made this unequal Distribution of Rewards and Punishments at first in this Island, as far back as Authors inform us, were the *Romans*, after them the *Saxons* and *Danes*, and last of all the *Normans*. Wherever a Nation or People undergo what is properly called a Conquest, the Conqueror disposes of the Lands and Possessions of the Conquered to his Favourites and Followers, and so fixes that unequal Distribution of the good Things of this Life, as he sees proper. Writers say, that *William* the Conqueror took away the Lands, Manors and

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Estates

Monasteries, Chuntries, &c. and give unto them the Tenth of all their Possessions, besides Free-will Offerings. It was the Promise of future Blessedness, Joys inconceivable, and Immortality, that induced our *Saxon* Monarchs to give the Tenth of all this Kingdom to the Church. The latter Place was invented to punish the *Sacrilegious*, and all such who should blaspheme, or speak against the Clergy and their Religious Inventions.

Estates of the *English*, and gave them to his *Normans*. But even now all the Honours, Wealth and Riches of every People are in the Hands of their respective Governors, and they raise this or that, or these or those to Dignity, Power and Profit as best suit with their Interest ; they grant Towns and Cities what Privileges they please, make this Man, Town or City rich, or that poor, and tax the Nations and People at their Pleasure ; lead them forth to War, and sacrifice so many Thousands they think fit to gratify their Ambition, Humour, Caprice, or what not ! This is the Case, and the Notions, if I can judge, we have of GOD's Excellency and Perfection justify what I have said. For to Him all Men are on a Level ; *to all alike his Sun riseth and setteth, and his Rains ascend and descend* (1). Who can justly say, GOD has more Respect for the King than the Cobbler ;—the Bishop than the poor starving Curate !

Remarks on Your Lordship's Seventh Position, viz. " GOD has set Bounds to our Knowledge, by limiting our Faculties ; and it is impossible He should infuse more into us than we are capable of receiving." *Vol. I. p. 115.*

I did indeed once think, that GOD had set Bounds to the Capacities of our intellectual Faculties ; till I read, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, of that surprizing Accomptant Mr. *Jedidiab Buxton*, whose Series of Numbers greatly astonished me ; and I concluded, that it was morally impossible for any Man ever after to form an Idea of a greater Series of Numbers. And in this Opinion, I remained for Four or Five Years, when in the same *Magazine* for the Year 1754, I read again of a Country Carpenter, in a Letter to the Author, signed T. S. who had carried a Series of Figures (in Number Six Hundred and Six) up to what he calls a *Centillion*, which is a Progression of



of One Hundred *Nomina*, each containing six Figures.

To what Extent Human Knowledge may be carried, is out of the Power of Man to tell, for sometimes a Thought, or even an Accident opens to our Conception, a Torrent of Invention or Knowledge. Thus Mr. *Locke*, to whom Mankind is said to be greatly indebted for his Labours, says, in the *Preface* to his Book of the *Human Understanding*, that when he first undertook to write on that Subject, he concluded, that all he could possibly say thereon would be contained in one Sheet, but when he came to set his Thoughts down on Paper, we find his Work swelled to *Threescore*, and that in a very *Small Letter*. And then after being sensible, he had not said enough, he presented us with a long *Addenda*, under the Title of, *The Conduct of the Human Understanding*, being half as much as the former: Arguments beget Arguments; Reasonings beget Reasonings; and Books beget Books. All which has led me to conclude, that the Almighty has not required of us the Belief of Impossibilities, Mysteries, as your Lordship calls them; and then to me the Question is, Whether the Belief of the Incarnation, Resurrection and Ascension of *Jesus of Nazareth*, and the Assumption of human Bodies into Heaven, &c. Things altogether incredible! are necessary to Salvation?

Remarks on Your Lordship's Eighth Position, *viz.*  
 " The Whole of Religion depends upon this Question, Whether there certainly be a God who will  
 " judge the World? " *Vol. I. p. 122.*

Admit that there is such a Being as we call God, (of which, my Lord, I have not the least Doubt) does it follow, that he must necessarily judge the World in that or any other Manner described by *Divines*? The Doctrine of a future Judgment is designed *in terrorem*; and I wish, since its Invention, it had answered the  
 End

End proposed, the Reformation of the World. Now I humbly presume, the Reformation of the World will never be obtained by the present Scheme of Ecclesiastical Politics, which is to believe as *Spiritual* or *Artificial Christians*, and to act as *Infidels*, *Pagans*, *Jews* and *Atheists*. If the Clergy did sincerely believe the Doctrines they daily preach, then would there be a pious, sober and religious Priesthood, and that in a short Time would produce also a sober and religious Laity. The single Point is, says the Bishop, Whether there be sufficient Evidence of a future State? I must answer, There is no such State; no one has, or can have, any Conception about it, but those imaginary ones set up and maintained by your Lordship and Party; and it may safely be affirmed, and proved too, if required, that our Lord and Saviour, *Jesus of Nazareth*, has not given us any Certainty of a future State, nor of the Existence of the Soul after Death.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Ninth Position, *viz.*  
 " *Christ* has promised and declared that he will raise  
 " us from the Dead." *Vol. I. p. 126.*

Your Lordship means, that *Christ* has promised and declared that he will make us again after Death has dissolved the vital Union. " He can do it, you  
 " positively say, *p. 125.* who made Man out of nothing at first." Let me ask, How is it possible for our Bodies to subsist in Heaven, where, it is affirmed, we shall neither eat nor drink, be married, &c. But a little farther, *p. 132.* you stile this a *Mystery*, and so let it remain, for I will not trouble myself any farther about it; only add, that I am not altogether so great a *Fool* as to think your Lordship believes every Point you have advanced.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Tenth Position, *viz.*  
 " GOD has declared to us, that he has a Son and a  
 " Spirit, who dwell with and in him from all Eternity,  
 " ty,

“ ty, a Son who came to our Assistance, and a Spirit who is ever with us to guide us into all Truth.”  
*Vol. I. p. 137.*

By what Means has God declared these Truths, as your Lordship calls them, to Us? Why it does appear, that we are to suppose and believe that the Writings of the *Old and New Testament* are the Revealed Will of GOD; for if this is not allowed, or is not supposed to be Truth, this Position falls to the Ground. Your Lordship affirms, that the *Son of God*, or *God's Son*, came to our Assistance. Does it follow, because the *Constantine Fathers* found it necessary to advance *Jesus of Nazareth* to the Godhead, and to stile Him, *God the Son*, that he is so? Or does it follow, because it is now generally said, and perhaps by many believed, that *Christ* is now in Heaven sitting at the Right Hand of God clothed with that very Body he had before and after his Resurrection, that it really is so? But, suppose all these Truths should be questioned by *Jews, Infidels, Libertines and Free-thinkers*, we *Christians* have the *Spirit of God* among us who doth guide us into all Truth, and will do so till the End of Time. Now to this *Guidance of the Spirit* I give just as much Credit as I do to that Story of *Theodoret*, who affirmed, before the Second General Council of *Constantinople*, that the *Holy Ghost* appeared the Night before, and ordered him to propose to that Assembly the next Day, the Junction of the *Apocalypse* to the *Gospels and Canonical Epistles*.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Eleventh Position, viz. “ The Gospel did expel the false and pernicious “ Notions of *Heathenism*.” *Vol. I. p. 153.*

The Gospel did not expel the false and pernicious Notions of *Heathenism*, it only changed and metamorphosed them. The *Venus* of the Ancients was changed into the Image and Worship of the Virgin *Mary*, and the Statues of the *Sibyls* were daily converted

verted into the Images of female Heroines and She-Saints and Martyrs. The *Heathens* gave to Tutelars, the Protection and Guardianship of their Kingdoms, Provinces and Cities, the *Christians* did so to Angels and Saints; the *Heathens* prayed to certain Genii for their Aid and Assistance, the *Christians* did the same to Angels, and a whole Troop of Canonized Saints and Martyrs. And, continues your Lordship, in little more than three Centuries, (reckoning from the Birth of *Jesus of Nazareth*) the Empire became *Christian*, which compleated the Victory (you mean the Victory of the Gospel) over the *Heathen* Deities. You should, my Lord, have said, That when *Constantine* was brought into the *Christian* Scheme, (into which he came as a Politician) he allowed all the *Christians* free Toleration to teach and believe the then spiritual Doctrines the Fathers had invented; and that all the *Heathen* Idols, and their abominable Festivities, &c. were not laid aside till the Close of the Sixth Century, and that then most of the *Pagan* Festivals were incorporated into the *Christian* Faith and Practice, and have been ever since spiritualized. It is notorious, that the Philosophers and learned Men among the *Heathens*, who came into *Christianity*, for the Sake of the Loaves and the Fishes, brought with them strong Attachments to their old Principles and Customs, and did introduce into *Christianity* as many of the *Heathen* Notions and Opinions they possibly could. They were led to do this, in which they were joined by the holy Fathers and Bishops, with a View to conform *Christianity* to *Heathenism*; and thereby to bring in the Populace. And we find, that Pope or Saint *Gregory*, in his Letter to *Austin*, our *English* Apostle, on the Conversion of this Kingdom to the Catholick Faith, at the Beginning of the Seventh Century, orders him to conform the *Christian* Festivals to the *Heathen*, &c. Many of these Festivals, and almost all of the *Pagan* Doctrines



Doctrines and Superstitions do remain to this Day (*u*), and being christianized will never be abolished. This was likewise done in Relation to the *Jews*; most of the *Jewish* Doctrines and Customs, those which were the most palatable and lucrative, were incorporated into *Christianity*; whereby it so happened that a Multitude of *Jews* flocked into the *Christian* Faith.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Twelfth Position, *viz.* "Hopes have at best but an uncertain Foundation in Natural Religion." *Vol. I. p. 186.*

If this were true, Natural Religion would be of little or no Use to Mankind; but as the Reverse is the Truth, the Religion of Nature was the first, and is now the only sure and certain Guide for Men to walk by. In the Religion of Nature are no intricate Articles of Faith, no Mysteries, no Secrets, no future Rewards and Punishments; the Reward of Virtue is annexed to its Performance, and the Punishment of Sin follows the Commission; no Atonements for

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Sin;

(*u*) We, my Lord, at this Day, have among us most of the old *Heathen Saxon* Superstitions, only *spiritualized*; for Instance, the *Saxons* our Ancestors worshipped three Gods in one Temple, *viz.* *Tuisco*, *Thor* and *Fricco*, and we do now worship three Gods, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*. And in the very Manner in which *they* worshipped their three Gods, *we* do worship our Gods. As *they* prayed to their Gods and praised them, which *their* Priests did occasionally; *we* every seventh Day pray to and praise our three Gods: O God the Father: O God the Son: O God the Holy Ghost have Mercy upon us miserable Sinners:—Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. [See the Liturgy] Most of the Expressions used in the *Christian* Liturgies were borrowed from the *Heathen* Liturgies, and some from the *Jewish*, as the *Lord's Prayer* and the *Songs* or *Psalms* called *David's*. *Austin* changed every one of the *Saxon* Festivals into *Christian* Feasts and Wakes; on all which Occasions, he commanded the Rich and Wealthy to slay Oxen and Sheep, and to invite thereto their Neighbours and the common People. And at this Time, in our public Streets, and at our Feasts, Clubs and Revellings, we invoke the titular *Pagan* Genius of this Isle in these Words, Song or Ditty:

*Rule Britannia! Britannia rule the Waves!*  
*Britons never will be Slaves.*

Sin; no Intercessors for fallen Man.—In it every Thing is reasonable, and its Hopes are rational and comprehensible. It is contained in a few Words; it wants not the Flourishes of Rhetorick to set it off, nor the Oratory of a *Tully* or a *Demosthenes* to recommend it.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Thirteenth Position, viz. "The *Romans* were of Opinion, that their Religion concerned no Body but themselves." *Vol. I. p. 260.*

Your Lordship speaks Truth. It is evident, say you, "that no Law (or Religion) extends farther than the Lawgiver intends." You might have added, that formerly every State, City, Town or Corporation, fixed and established such a Form of religious Worship, as to them seemed the most convenient, and the best adapted to the Humours and Geniuses of their several People. The Case is much the same now; in *England* the Form of Religion is Episcopal, in *Scotland*, Presbyterian, because this Variety best suits with the various Tempers of the Inhabitants of the two Nations; *Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Holland, Russia, &c.* and all the Catholic Countries are Examples of this Kind.

Having thus, my Lord, finished my *Remarks* on the *First Volume* of your Lordship's *Discourses*, I shall, without the least Ceremony, proceed to remark on your *Second Volume*.

Remarks on Your Lordship's First Discourse; See *Several Discourses, Vol. II. p. 1, &c.*

I shall begin with your Text, the primary Sense whereof your Lordship has not at all regarded. *And certain Men which came down from Judea, taught the Brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the Manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small Dissention and Disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas,*

*bas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders, about this Question.*

These *certain Men* are supposed by all Commentators to be *Jews*, and *Jews* in the Interest of *Christianity*; who coming out of *Judea* taught the Brethren, and affirmed, that unless they were circumcised, according to the Commandment of *Moses*, they could not be saved. To come at the true and genuine Meaning of the Expression, *Ye cannot be saved*, we must here recollect, ~~that~~ the Disciples of the Messiah daily expected that he would come again in the Flesh, and restore the Kingdom to *Israel*. Now, argued these Men, when the Messiah shall appear, no one will be saved, *i. e.* will not be taken into the Protection and Safeguard of the Messiah, unless he bear in his Body the outward Sign of Circumcision. This Doctrine, these Men affirmed to be taught by the Apostles and Elders at *Jerusalem*;—who were all circumcised, and so were their Disciples. This Sense of the Text shews, the real Force of the Argument, why the *Gentile* Converts ought to be circumcised, *viz.* that they might be known by this Mark in their Flesh, be taken under the Protection of, and into the Kingdom of, the Messiah, and be thereby secured from the Barbarity and Cruelty of the *Romans*, who were the inveterate Enemies of the Messiah, purely because his Disciples taught, that when he came again he would rule over the whole World, and consequently destroy the *Roman* Universal Monarchy.

Page 11, your Lordship affirms, “ that the *Christian* Religion is contained in the Books of the “ *New Testament.*” Very true! my Lord, but then it is that *Artificial* or *Spiritual Christianity*, which I have described above, *P. 19, &c.* But in Order to evince the Method of compiling this Sort of *Christianity*, and for the farther Satisfaction of the Reader, I will lay before him some other Reasons wherefore

certain Parts of the *New Testament* History were invented. The first I shall instance in, is the Story of the Resurrection of *Jesus of Nazareth*. This Story was invented on Purpose, to establish the Doctrines of a *Holy Ghost* or a Comforter; the Power of forgiving Sins; and to give to *Peter* the Headship of the Church: Read *John* xx, and xxi. It was customary in the early Ages of the Church whenever the Bishops or Rulers wanted Power, to feign that that Power was given them by God. Now it having been said, that there were three Persons in the Godhead, it was found necessary that the *Son* should introduce into the World, as the Story does, the *Holy Spirit*; which *Holy Spirit* was to remain always with the Faithful, and was to guide the Fathers of the Church into all Truth. And this Contrivance answered very well, for the *Holy Ghost*, as I have shewn elsewhere, had the Power of appearing any where, at any Time, and to any Person, though, according to Historians, he usually appeared to holy Men, Priests, and afterwards to Monks and Nuns. In my humble Opinion, the Sixteenth Chapter of *St. John* was wrote by some of the Sticklers for the Divinity of the *Holy Ghost*, and inserted into that *Gospel* about the *Constantine* Age; *Theodoret* and his Party were able to do it, and they did many such Kind of Things. The Holy Scriptures were at this Time much easier interpolated, than since the Use of Printing. We are now obliged to be beholden to Exposition and Comparison to bring it to support the Doctrines, we have, since the Erection of that Art, invented, whereas before the *Interpolators* had nothing more to do but to write that *Gospel* over again, into which the *Bishops* were minded to insert the *Interpolation*. The Scriptures were of old (and I wish they had remained so) in the Hands of the Clergy only, and for some Ages only in the Custody of the Bishops. At first, when the *Four Gospels* were the only Canon,



no Person had a Copy thereof besides the Bishops, each Bishop had a Copy; from which Copy, as from an Oracle, he taught his Clergy daily, and the Clergy took it *vivâ voce* from him, and then went about his Diocese preaching. And this was one of the Reasons why the Clergy, in the primitive Times, lived in the same House with their Bishop, eat at the same Table, and slept under the same Roof. Upon the Increase of *Christians*, Bishops founded Monasteries in several Parts of their Dioceses, being assisted therein by the pious Laity, and they obtained Licence from the Bishop of *Rome*, (who from the Time of *Sylvester* was looked on as the Head of the Church,) to have each a Copy of the Scriptures, which was kept by the Abbot or Prior; and who from thence taught and instructed, the Monks or Friars in the Mysteries of *Artificial* or *Spiritual Christianity*; and this Grant brought in, in Process of Time, what has since been called, *School-Divinity*. And thus, indeed, in some Measure, stood the Nature of the Writings of the *Old* and *New Testament*, till the Rise of Printing, and that unaccountable Itch of the Laity, to know what was contained in these sacred Writings. Sacred indeed they were while in the Hands of the Clergy only, and in a Language the Laity did not understand. The *English* willing to see their Way to Heaven in their own Language first translated it out of the Original; since which Time, the Clergy have not had it in their Power to interpolate the Sacred Books; but then whether this Translation of the Scriptures into *English* has been of any real Service, is a Point not easily to be determined. It is certain the Use of the Scriptures in the *Mother Tongue* hath divided us into numberless little Sects (*u*), which at this Day, [*A. D.* 1755.] swarm in

(*u*) *Viz.* Presbyterians, Independants, Anabaptists, Quakers, Sabatarians, French Prophets, Seekers, Methodists, Moravians, Erskinites, Jacobites, &c. &c.

in this Metropolis; the Consequences of the Act of Toleration: Since every Man who thinks himself cloathed with the Spirit, and that he hath the Gift of Preaching, may become a licenced Teacher for so small a Sum as *Half a-Crown*.

A second Instance of making Stories, to serve particular Purposes, and inserting them afterwards into the Body of one or other of the *Gospels*, is that famous one of the Woman taken in Adultery, which was made on the following Occasion. The Court of *Theodosius* was full of Adulterers, and many were taken in Adultery, and according to the *Roman* Laws put to Death. *Pulcheria*, (the beautiful Virgin, and Sister to the Emperor *Theodosius*,) who then ruled the Empire under her Brother, reflecting upon the unhappy State of her Sex, and how often they were causelessly put to Death, took Occasion to search the *Records*, and found, that in but a few Years past, Three Thousand Women had suffered Death for Adultery. This Lady, in Pity to her Sex, sought Occasion to rescind this cruel, inhuman and barbarous Law, and having represented this grievous Case of her Sex, with all its aggravating Circumstances, to her Brother *Theodosius*, it was thereupon asked, Whether *Christ*, then also stiled, *The Son of God*, had denounced Death against Adulterers? Upon Enquiry, one of the Fathers, by good Chance, found among some Papers, which were, on this Occasion, said to belong to *St. Papias*, the Story of the Woman taken in Adultery. This Story, then foisted on the World as nigh Four Hundred Years old, was received as authentick, though but just then invented, to serve the above Purpose; and accordingly it was, by a General Council, ordered to be inserted in the *Gospel* of *St. John*, and with us it, at present, composes the first Part, or Paragraph, of the Eighth Chapter of that *Gospel*.

A Third is the Story of *Christ's* Turning Water into Wine at the Marriage of *Cana* in *Galilee*. In *Rome*, as now in *London*, in the Reign of the Emperor *Theodosius*, there were divers Trading Corporations, who were, like our's, governed by Master, Wardens and Assistants. It happened on the Establishment of *Christianity*, to become a popular Question, Whether *Christians* were allowed freely to drink Wine? The Debate lasted for some Time, but the *Vinariii* [Vintners] being a cunning as well as a rich Body of People, applied to the Bishops, who then had the Keeping of the Oracles of God; and they for Reasons which may be easily guessed at, formed, in Behalf of the *Vinariii* the Story, as we have it related in the Second Chapter of *John*. And thus the Use of Wine, which is now prohibited among the *Mahometans*, and was not, of old, allowed to be drank among the *Christians* but physically, or as *St. Paul* (x) orders, a little for Health Sake, till the Time of *Theodosius*, is continued down to this Day. This Story, also, if I mistake not, was found among the Papers of *St. Papias*. *Grotius* is my Author.

A Fourth is the Story of the Descent of the *Holy Ghost* on the *Apostles*. The *Christian* Clergy of the Three First Centuries, a few only excepted, were Men of no Learning; so far from it, that like our modern Enthusiasts, they rejected and despised it. Men were not, in this Period, trained up in Academies and Schools, to qualify them for the Ministry. There was no Occasion for it; because all that they had to do, was to tell the People, that the *Messiah* was come in the *Flesh*, was risen again, was ascended into Heaven, and would return from thence shortly to take on him, in Favour of God's Chosen People, the Rule of the whole World. But when this  
Body

(x) 1 Tim. v. 23. "Drink no longer Water, but use a little  
"Wine for thy Stomach's Sake, and thine often Infirmitie."

Body of *Temporal Christianity*, became *Spiritual* and *Artificial Christianity*, and it was found necessary to adjourn the present Expectation of the Messiah to that indeterminate Period, *The End of the World*, which Scheme of Ecclesiastical Policy pleased *Constantine*; the Ignorance of the *Christian* Clergy, compared with the *Heathen* Philosophers of that Age, many of whom on *Constantine's* giving in to tolerate *Christianity* became Bishops, Priests and Archbishops in the *Christian* Church, it was thought necessary to introduce into *Christianity*, the Knowledge of the Tongues. At this Time it happened, that there was some Dispute concerning the Godship and Divinity of the *Holy Ghost*. To determine this Dispute, and to shew, that the *Holy Ghost* was God, and to shew the Divinity and Usefulness of the Knowledge of Tongues, is the Design of that famous Story in *Acts* ii. 1—36. which informs us, that the Apostles being met together on the *Lord's Day*, or first Day of the Week, in one House, the *Holy Ghost* descended from Heaven, and sat upon their Heads in the Shape of Cloven or Slit Tongues, the Reader may see the Form of it in our Prints; and the Consequence of it was, that these twelve illiterate Men, as they were before these Cloven Tongues appeared, had Utterance given to them by the *Holy Ghost*, who chose, it seems, according to the Story, to appear and inspire them in the Shape of Cloven Tongues, to speak the following Languages, *viz.* the *Parthian*, the *Median*, the *Elamitic*, the *Mesopotamic*, the *Hebrew*, the *Cappadocian*, the *Pontick*, the *Asiatick*, the *Phrygian*, the *Pamphylian*, the *Egyptian*, the *Cyrenian*, the *Cretan* and *Arabick*. At this Time, this Story serves three Purposes, *viz.* to establish the Divinity of the *Holy Ghost*, the Utility of learning a Variety of Languages; and lastly, the Feast of *Pentecost*, or *Whitsontide*, which was instituted purely to commemorate this great and stupendous Miracle; but he



he who can believe the Story to be Truth has given up his Reason and his Senses, and is fit to be guided only by *Enthusiasts* and *Visionaries* (y).

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(y) To shew the Reader, that this Method of Making Stories and Miracles, to serve particular and political Purposes, was no new Invention in the Times of *Constantine* and *Theodosius*, but was found out and practised by the Lawgivers and Priests under the *Jewish* Dispensation, I shall from the MS. *pene me*, transcribe the following Particulars; the Author delivers himself as answering the Questions of a particular Friend.

You said, you would tell me, Why the Story of *Cain* and *Abel* was invented by *Moses*, and inserted as one of the first Transactions after the World was made? I answer; It was framed to establish the Usage of *Bloody Sacrifices*. You may perceive by the Story or Tradition, who made it, and when it was made. If we can give any Credit to profane Authors, or even to sacred, we shall jointly find, that the Offerings of the first Men were of the Fruits of the Earth. The *Egyptians* before and at the Time of *Joseph* and *Jacob* sacrificed no Beast; for they had them, as we are told, in such Veneration, for their Utility, either on Account of their Milk, and other Uses, that they even adored them. Because, the *Hebrews* should not do the like, or rather to make or keep the *Hebrews* a separate People, *Moses* ordained, that they should kill or sacrifice the Beasts of the Field, and particularly those the *Egyptians* worshipped. Now *Moses*, or perhaps succeeding Priests, to shew, how acceptable the Sacrifices of Beasts were to God Almighty, invented the said Story, and inserted it as early in the History of the Creation of the World as they possibly could. I shall not recite the Story here, which the Reader has in the Fourth Chapter of *Genesis*; where it is told in the most ridiculous Manner possible; but if the Reader will in the Room of the Word *LORD*, which there stares him full in the Face in great Capitals, substitute the Word *Priest*, it will better, and more intelligibly bear reading; And the *PRIEST* had Respect unto *Abel*, and to his Offering. And this is plainly the Sense, if we compare this Offering to the Offering afterwards appointed by *Moses*; particularly that of the *Ram*, where *Moses* putting himself in the Place of God, says, *It is a Burnt-Offering unto the Lord*, [*Moses* or the Priest, for God cannot smell] *it is a sweet Savour, an Offering made by Fire unto the Lord*, i. e. the Priest. For the very same Reason, viz. to establish the Oblation of *Bloody Sacrifices*, was the Story of *Noah's* Offering invented; and to shew how grateful it was to, and how well pleased the Almighty was with the Smell of the Sacrifice, the *Historian* has introduced God as blessing *Noah*, his Sons, the Earth, and of making a Covenant with all Men, and giving as a Sign thereof, the *Rainbow*.

Again,

A little farther, *Page 15*, your Lordship very laconically says, “ If there be any Thing plain in any “ Book in the World, this is plain in Scripture, *That “ without Holiness no Man shall see God*: This is the “ Foundation of all Religion, the Ground upon which “ the Revelation itself is built.”

This *If* of your Lordship’s puzzled me for a whole Day, before I could comprehend the Meaning of it.  
At

Again, *Moses* wrote or invented his History of the Creation, to establish the following Things. First, The Religious Observation of every Seventh Day. Antiquity knew not the Observation of a Seventh Day, but it did of a Tenth. The ancient *Egyptians* and *Grecians*, long before the Days of *Moses*, (perhaps two Thousand Years) observed a tenth Day, for they thought, says Archbishop *Potter*, that the Gods had equally a Right as much to the tenth Part of their Time, as to the tenth Part of the Produce of the Earth. But *Moses*, about to give Laws and Rules to his *Hebrews*, thought it proper to abolish the ancient Observation of the tenth Day, and to substitute in its Room, the Observation of the seventh Day. To which End, he told his People, that God was six Days in making the World, and all Things therein contained. The most ancient Tradition concerning the Origin of the World was, *That it had no Beginning, and was eternal*; but those, among the Ancients, who flourished before *Moses*, and who allow that the World had a Beginning, were of Opinion, that it arose out of ancient Chaos, and was formed progressively, but whether it happened instantaneously, as some have thought, or was the Work of a Year, or Time, as others have taught, they could not determine. *Moses* was the first who taught in what Manner the World was made progressively, and how long it was in making; but then it is plain, that he invented his Story to establish the Observation of a Seventh Day; read the Story, and nothing is plainer than the Deduction. This Contrivance answered; for since the Coming of *Christianity*, though the Day has been changed, yet in all *Christendom*, and I believe in *Mahometism* too, a Seventh Day is observed. Secondly, *Moses* invented his History of the Creation on Purpose to establish a Priesthood, in the House of his Brother *Aaron*; who were weekly to declare to the People the Stories and Fictions, he, *Moses*, thought proper politically to make and write; which wonderful Absurdities have by that Means descended to us: not but the *Mosaic* History hath, since the Time of *Moses*, been interpolated, as will be seen hereafter. *Moses* learnt this of the *Heathen* Priests, who were accustomed, in his Time, in their Groves and High Places,

At last, I thought of reading it thus: " If there be  
 " any Thing obscure, dark, or ridiculous in any  
 " Book in the World, it is plain there are many  
 " such Things in Scripture." I began to enumerate  
 them, and having recounted them so far as to in-  
 clude, the Story of *Deborah*, and of *Sampson's* Hair;  
 his taking three Hundred Foxes, which he tied two  
 and two by the Tail, when having fastened a Fire-  
 brand in the Middle of the Cord which bound them

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Places, to set forth to the People assembled, the Wonders the *He-  
 roe* or *God* had performed, the *Image* represented; but it was not  
 so much as pretended, that any one of these *Gods* did make the  
 World, and create Man, the Beasts, and all Things. Now, says  
*Moses*, I will tell my People, that their *God*, who has brought  
 them out of *Egypt*, &c. made the World, &c. Thirdly, The  
 History of the Creation was invented by *Moses* to give Man the  
 Power and Dominion over all created Things. He concludes there-  
 fore, Man was the last of the created, but this is mere Supposition.  
 And it has been, and is now, a Query, Whether Man has a natural  
 Right to kill Beasts for Food or Raiment? This is certain; It had  
 been better for Man if he had never eaten the Flesh of Animals.  
 The universal Use of *Butchers Meat* has filled the human Species  
 so full of Diseases of various Kinds that Life is greatly shortened.  
 If we can credit *Julius Caesar*, [*Tacitus*, *Strabo*, &c.] he says, the  
*Britons* in his Time, who then lived upon the Fruits of the Earth,  
 attained generally the Age of *One-hundred twenty*; whereas now,  
 how few see *Forty*, or even *Twenty*, in Comparison of those who  
 are born. Fourthly, *Moses* wrote his History of the Creation also  
 in Order to establish the Superiority of the *Man* over the *Woman*.  
 It is for this Cause, he asserts that she was taken out of Man, *Gen.*  
*ii. 21. 22.* " And the Lord God caused a deep Sleep to fall upon  
 " Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his Ribs, and closed  
 " up the Flesh instead thereof. And the Rib, which the Lord  
 " God had taken from Man, made he a Woman, and brought  
 " her to the Man." Ridiculous enough! If such Stuff was found  
 in any other Book, save the *Bible*, how we should explode it! But  
 I have observed, that some Men, *dignified Men*, count the most ri-  
 diculous Accounts in the *Bible*, its greatest Beauties. And lastly,  
*Moses*, not knowing how to account for the general Degeneracy  
 and Depravity of Manners of his Countrymen the *Hebrews*, idly  
 conjectured and taught, which is another Reason for his Writing  
 his History of the Creation, that it sprang from the *Woman's*  
 tempting him to eat an Apple, and which he did eat. The whole  
 Story is so very ridiculous that I cannot dwell any longer upon it.

so together, he let them loose among the Crops of Standing Corn belonging to the *Philistines*, and they burnt them. From the Fields they went into the Olive Yards, and burnt them likewise, *Judg. xv. 4.* his slaying one Thousand Men with the Jawbone of an Ass, *ver. 16.* God's cleaving an hollow Place in the said Jawbone, after it had done the above Execution, and there coming out thereat, a sufficient Quantity of Water, to slack the Thirst of the Conqueror, enough to revive and cheer his Spirits, *ver. 19.* and how that the *Philistines* having put out *Samson's* Eyes, and cast him into Prison, he was, on a Festival Day, brought forth to make Sport before the *Philistines* and their Rulers, in Revenge for the Loss of his Sight, he took it in his Head to pull down a House or Gate, which it seems stood on two Posts, or Pillars, and by the Fall of the said House slew himself and three Thousand Men, *Judg. xvi. 27.* And how that *Elisba* made Iron to swim, *2 Kings vi. 6. 1 Chron. xx. 3 :* I was so tired, that I left off, crying out, That these Stories were more ridiculous than *Mother G—se's Tales !*

Your Lordship affirms, *That without Holiness no Man shall see God ;* which Expression is borrowed from *St. Paul* to the *Hebrews*, Chap. xii. 14. *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.* The Meaning of the Term *Holiness* is only this, in this Place, to be stedfast in the Faith and Hope of *Christ's* Second Coming, which the Believers then daily expected, without which no Man will see the Lord, *i. e.* If ye do not remain stedfast, when *Christ* cometh you will not be admitted into his Kingdom, which is here meant by the Term, *No Man shall see, &c.* Your Lordship will chop upon me the Context, as determining the Words to a spiritual Sense, but then I retort, that the following Verses, as many other in this Epistle, are the Interpolations  
of



of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, or *Cbrysoftom*; one of whom, I scruple not to say, forged the whole *Epistle*, and called it *St. Paul's*, as *Papias* served *John* the Divine, in relation to the *Apocalypse*.

Before I dismiss this *Discourse*, I must take Notice of another Laconism of your Lordship's. It is in *Page 17*, " There are many Doubts about the Sacraments of the Gospel, and how and what Grace they confer; but dispute as you will, this one Point is clear, *He that believes and is baptized, the same shall be saved.*"

I wish your Lordship had been so kind as to have instanced in one of the Graces any one of the Sacraments of the Gospel convey; for though I have heard many talked of being conveyed by this or that Sacrament, yet I never found the Effects either in myself or others. It is true, our Church acknowledgeth but two Sacraments, *viz.* Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; and I believe there are no more; and if they were not Sacraments, I know not what Harm would accrue to Society in general, though it might make some Difference to the Priesthood. As for *Baptism*, which I have been told, I received when I was young, and understood nothing, being, as I have heard say, but one Day old, I do not know one Grace I have received thereby, except being cleansed from the Pollution of the Sin of *Adam* and *Eve*. As to the *Lord's Supper*, I remember well, that I was confirmed by one of your Lordship's Predecessors, in the Choir of the Cathedral Church of *St. Paul*, when I was about sixteen Years of Age, when the Minister of my Parish, preaching on that holy Ordinance, exhorted all the Youth, to come on the next *Sunday* to the Participation of the Body and Blood of *Jesus Christ*; he shewed, how his Blood was spilt to wash away our Sins, and that he offered up himself a *Sacrifice* for the Sins of us, and all Men. Accordingly, my Lord,

I became a Communicant, and so I continued for many Years. Indeed, now I cannot say I receive it on a religious Account; but being by my Neighbours elected yearly to be a Sort of a *Street-King*, (as they are termed in *Bantam*) I am obliged by the Law to qualify myself to execute that Post by solemnly receiving the Sacrament, in the Presence of two credible Witnesses. I know not one Grace either of these Sacraments convey; and I heartily wish your Lordship, or one of your Chaplains, would advertise *One* in the *Daily Advertiser* of the First of the next Month, it will cost but *Five Shillings*, if inserted in the *First Page*.

Your Lordship dogmatizes with a Witness—"But dispute as you will, this Point is clear, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*" Every Cock will crow on his own Dunghill. And it is certainly an honest Servant who stands up for and takes the Part of his Master. You must know the *Bishop* takes these Words to be spoken by his Master *Christ*. They are in *Mark xvi.* and are Part of that Story, the *Constantine* Fathers and others invented concerning the Resurrection of *Christ*, and his appearing thereon to his Disciples. But fie, my Lord! sure you cannot credit such *Old Womens Fables*! No Man ever did rise again, and ascend into Heaven; Iron never did swim, nor did *Christ* ever walk upon the Sea.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Second Discourse, Vol. II. p. 23.

Page 28. "It [the Christian Revelation] has brought down from Heaven the Pardon of God to all the Sins of Men, which [Revelation] was sealed with the Blood of its great Author, the ever-blessed Son of God." My Lord, the Blood of *Christ*, nor the Pardon of God cannot forgive two Sins, *viz.* Murder and Sodomy; and I may add, neither will it forgive High-Treason.

Now

Now this Story of *Christ's* Satisfaction for Sin by the pouring out of his Blood on the Cross, was the Invention of the *Constantine* Fathers to conform the Death of *Christ* to the Sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb. Now if the Allegory conveys any Thing it conveys this, that as the Blood of the Paschal Lamb was supposed to atone for, or wash away, the Sins of the Children of *Israel*, so the Blood of *Christ* poured out on the Cross is supposed to wash away the Sins of the World. But both these Hypotheses subsisted no-where but in the N—d—s of Churchmen. But here is the Mistake, which I take to be wilful, you say, the Blood of *Christ* was shed to wash away the Sins of all Men, the Truth is, as the Gospel testifies, *Jesus of Nazareth* died as an Enemy and Traitor to the *Romans*. He was crucified, because he asserted, that he was the Messiah, the King of the *Jews*. Indeed, after Time spiritualized this Transaction, and because it was commonly before said, that *Jesus of Nazareth* died for Rebellion, the *Constantine* Fathers formed the above spiritual Story, which many, as well as your Lordship, has greedily swallowed; but then it has been without the least Regard to Truth, or to a due Consideration of the Circumstances of *Christ* and his Disciples.

Page 31. " The Condition of Man before the  
 " Coming of Christ was such, that he could not,  
 " by the Help of Reason and Nature, so apply him-  
 " self to God, as to be secure of his Pardon and  
 " Mercy; but there was a Necessity of providing  
 " other Means besides those of Reason and Nature,  
 " which no one could provide but God alone. God  
 " has provided us with the Assistance of his Holy  
 " Spirit, and appointed his own Son for our Re-  
 " deemer and Mediator." All this Stuff your Lord-  
 ship builds upon the Authority of *St. Paul*. It is a  
 natural Deduction from your Text, and from several  
 other

other Passages of that inspired Writer. Now as your Lordship has thought fit to build your Faith on *St. Paul*, let us here examine, whether it be reasonable to believe *St. Paul*? For if *St. Paul*, upon a fair Trial, shall be found to be an Enthusiast, a Visionary, a Deceiver, and the like, no sensible Man ought to credit him, or rely on any Thing he has said; tho' here it must be noted, that every Thing said to be wrote by *St. Paul* were not wrote by him; and his Writings, it is to be feared, like others of the early Ages, suffered many Alterations and Interpolations.

Now if *St. Paul* be found to be an Enthusiast and a Visionary, he will deserve no Credit. Your Lordship will allow, I suppose, *St. Paul* told the Story [to *St. Luke*] of *Christ's* Appearance to him in the Road to *Damascus* (z). He must be allowed to be the Author of it, from the several Circumstances of it! I have not, at present, either Time or Room to examine the ridiculous Parts of this Story, but I promise your Lordship when I have both, I will do it; I shall only observe, that the Story shews the great Genius of the Apostle in imposing on Mankind. It was framed to commemorate his Conversion, to give him a Divine Commission, which otherwise he must have wanted, and to render him capable of being a Revealer of the Mind of God to the *Gentiles*. Of the same Sort is that enthusiastick Story of his being caught up into the third Heaven (a), and hearing Things unutterable. Any rational Man, who gives himself the Trouble to read and consider this Vision, must blush for our modest Apostle!

Backed by *St. Paul* your Lordship roundly asserts, that God has provided us with the Assistance of his  
Holy

(z) Acts ix. 1—22. (a) 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4. "I knew a Man in Christ, about fourteen Years ago caught up to the third Heaven. And I knew such a Man how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unpeakable Words."



*Holy Spirit*, and that he hath appointed his Son, (that is, your Lordship means) *Jesus of Nazareth* for our Redeemer and Mediator. These are imaginary Offices, I mean the Offices of *Redeemer* and *Mediator*, as now applied to *Jesus of Nazareth*, and invented subsequent to the Period of spiritualizing *Christianity*. At first the Term *Redeemer* was no otherwise used than synonymous with the Word *Saviour*. The Messiah was expected to redeem the Chosen People of *Israel* from the temporal Bondage of the *Romans*, but since the CHURCH has thought fit to change this temporal Redemption and Salvation, into a spiritual Redemption and Salvation, of redeeming and saving us from the Guilt of our Sins. These Offices are applied to *Jesus Christ* as purchasing our Redemption, or Freedom, from the Bondage and Wrath of God due unto our Sins, by his Dying on the Cross. And the Term *Mediator* is given *Christ* on the Invention of that idle Conceit, that *Jesus of Nazareth* now sitteth at the Right Hand of God the Father, clothed with the human Nature, where he continually interceeds for us, and mediates between God and Man. But, *Q ridiculum ridiculissimum !*

I shall say no more, being tired with such Stuff and Nonsense, but proceed to remark on your Lordship's Third Discourse, *Vol. II. p. 43.*

You say, *p. 48.* “ At the first Preaching of the Gospel, all the worldly-minded Men, and generally all the great Men, were professed Enemies to our Saviour. No sooner did he appear to preach a new Doctrine, but they opposed him: Not that they had any Time or Opportunity to examine his Pretensions; but this Presumption, that his Doctrine would thwart their Interest, and lessen their Power among the People, prevailed with them to endeavour to stifle and suppress this new Doctrine before it spread to their Prejudice; in which they

“ were evidently guided, not by Sense or Reason, but  
 “ by a perverse Will and evil Disposition.” And  
 pray who would not have been the Enemies (none  
 but *Jews*) of a Doctrine that tended to overturn the  
*Roman State*. For the fundamental Doctrine of *Nat-  
 ural Christianity*, as I have fully shewn, was the Ex-  
 pectation of a Messiah that would restore the Kingdom  
 to *Israel*, and set up, in Favour of the *Jews*, an uni-  
 versal Monarchy. Hence it was, that this Attempt  
 in *Jesus of Nazareth* drew on him the Enmity of all  
 the great Men, by which I understand the *Roman Ru-  
 lers* and *Viceroy*s, and which, as in all Cases of *Sedi-  
 tion*, brought on *Jesus* Crucifixion, and on his Disci-  
 ples Persecution and Death. Put the Case, my Lord,  
 Suppose at next *Easter*, there should appear at your  
 Cathedral of *St. Paul*, a Man, riding on an Ass, at-  
 tended by eleven Men, some Women, and a vast  
 Mob, and he should possess the Church, and say,  
 that that was the Seat of his Father, (meaning *David*  
 or some other) and that he was come to seat himself  
 on the Throne, (meaning of *England*) let me ask  
 you, Would not your Lordship, the Dean and the  
 Canons be the first who would drive him thence, lay  
 Hands on him, and procure him to be sentenced to  
 the triple Tree? The Case is parallel, the Great  
 Men (whom your Lordship artfully stiles, *the world-  
 ly-minded Men*) then, as they are now, were in the  
 Places of Honour and Profit, and they never are  
 (few Instances excepted) for changing the Constitu-  
 tion of their Country, in Favour of a restless Party,  
 a Banditti of Malecontents. The Reader may easily  
 see, how spiritual or artificial and imaginary *Christi-  
 anity* has quite blinded you, otherwise you would never  
 have published such *Trash* and *Nonsense*!

Remarks on Your Lordship's Fifth Discourse, Vol.  
 II. p. 87. Your Text is, *Then said one unto him, Lord,  
 are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,*  
 Strive

*Strive to enter in at the strait Gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able,* Luke xiii. 23, 24.

These Words your Lordship has designedly interpreted in a Sense, which was found out about the *Constantine* Age, and which through divers Refinements by the *Schoolmen* and others has come down to the present Time. The Sense, *Jesus* used them in, and in which the People understood them, was plain and easy. *Hammond*, *Whitby* and *Burkit* tell us, that *Christ* here alludes to a Custom among the *Jews*, at their Marriage Feasts and Suppers, who admitted their Guests by Means of a strait Gate, and that after all were entered the strait or narrow Gate was shut to. I will not contend the Point. However, this does not destroy the primary and genuine Sense of the Words, which I shall now lay before the Reader. *Jesus*, it seems, had some Time before this Event told the People, that he was the Messiah, and that he was come to deliver his Brethren, the Seed of *Abraham*, from Bondage; and moreover, he affirmed, that he himself should sit on the Throne of his Father *David*, and that the Law should go forth from *Sion*, or *Jerusalem*; and that as many as received this Doctrine, and adhered to him as the Messiah, so many should enjoy his Protection, and should be saved from the *Roman* Rage and Cruelty. Upon this Declaration, which was made some Time before *Jesus* drew nigh *Jerusalem*, a certain Person among the People, who, it is likely was deputed, or desired, to put the Question, said to *Jesus*, *Are there few that be saved?* i. e. How many Lord will be saved, or preserved from the approaching Ruin; for if we receive you for our King, will not the *Romans* come and destroy us, and we pray thee, Master, tell us, Will many of us be saved from their Destruction? *Jesus* did not answer directly, but circumlocutorily thus: I am your Mes-

siah; and I am the King of the *Jews*; and at the approaching Festival I will go up to *Jerusalem*, and there before all the Nation of the *Jews* then assembled will I take on me the Rule and Government of the Children of *Israel*; then, on that Day, let all those who are, on my Side, pass in at the strait, or narrow, Gate of the Temple; for all such who enter thereat I will take under my Protection, and they shall be safe, or saved. Then I declare unto you, the Crowd, those who shall thrust and throng to enter, shall be so great, that many who shall then seek to enter, shall not be able, and consequently will not be saved.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Seventh Discourse, Vol. II, p. 131.

In this Discourse your Lordship hath chosen for your Text, *Luke* iv. 1, 2. *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the Wilderness, being forty Days tempted of the Devil.* Idle enough! even though we regard the Reason that induced the ancient Fathers and Bishops of the Church to make this Story. Pope *Evaristus* the First made the Story, and he did it, in order to establish the Holy Season of *Lent*. It seems, before this Period, there was a Story current among the Disciples of *Jesus*, that he (*Jesus*) on the Apprehension of *John*, passed through *Jordan*, driven by the Spirit of Fear, and so escaped out of *Judea* into the *Wilderness*, and there he remained a certain Time, but how long is not particularly known. Pope *Evaristus* was the first who fixed the Time of *Jesus's* Peregrination in the *Wilderness* to Forty Days, and made the Story, of which your Lordship's Text is a Part. And here I desire the Reader to turn to the Passage in the Fourth Chapter of *St. Luke*, and read it, for I protest it is so idle and ridiculous, that I cannot bear the Fatigue of transcribing it. I shall,  
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at present, remark no farther on this Story, only observing, that it was made to cover the Cowardice and Temerity of *Jesus of Nazareth*, on his running away from *John* at the Time he was apprehended by the *Herodians*. He *Jesus* ran through the River *Jordan*, then fordable at *Bethabara*, and by that Means got out of the Tetrarchy of *Herod*, and consequently out of his Power and Jurisdiction.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Tenth Discourse, Vol. II. p. 209, &c.

The grand and primary Assertion of this Discourse is to prove, That the Blood of *Christ* was shed for the Sins of the whole World. And the Subject which your Lordship has inferred from thence, is, *The Great Duty of Repentance*.

With your Lordship's Leave, we will here enquire, How at first the Doctrine of Repentance arose? It is said, that *John the Baptist* came preaching Repentance, *Repent*, said he, *for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand* (b). To explain this Phrase, according to its true and original Signification, we must have a particular Regard to that general Expectation, which the *Jews* then had of a temporal Deliverer. Therefore, this is the natural Explanation of the Words: "Return; change your Minds; come off  
" from your Obedience to the *Roman* Power; as-  
" semble yourselves together; put yourselves in  
" Battle Array, and assert your ancient Liberty:  
" For behold! even now, the Messiah, the long  
" expected Restorer and Redeemer of the Children  
" of *Israel*, is at Hand!" This was the Repentance *John* preached, and this was the Repentance the People understood, and which they came into. But since *John's* Time, and since *Christ's* Time too, the Notion of Repentance has been spiritualized, and it has been made by the *Constantine* Fathers, the School-

men,

men, and others, to signify Repentance, Sorrow, or Contrition for Sins. And, my Lord, that all Men might be made Sinners, *Churchmen* have endeavoured to persuade us, that every Person has sinned, without his own Consent, or his being in the least privy thereto (c). Thus we are told by our Church (d), that by the Fall of *Adam* we are all become Sinners; such a natural Pollution is conveyed to us their Posterity thereby, that all Men did, from the Creation of the World, to the Coming of *Christ*, lie under the Wrath of an offended God, and sentenced to everlasting Perdition; but that through the Blood of *Christ* shed upon the Cross, and through the Merits of his Passion, we may, by laying Claim thereto, have Remission of our Sins; *O absurdum absurdissimum!* — Sin has no other Way of Derivation, but by Imitation, Habit and Custom; and the Sins or Habits of a Father can no other Way descend to or affect the Son, or Offspring, than that he is often the Means

(c) “Whoever views Mankind in their present State, into which they came by no voluntary Act of their own, but placed in it by him who is their Maker, and will be their Judge; subject to Ignorance and Superstition by a Kind of Necessity of Birth and Education; surrounded with many natural Infirmities and Passions, arising from no Crime of which they are conscious.— God would not have suffered the World to have been filled with weak miserable Creatures, had he not intended them for Objects of his Mercy.— The Religion and Morality which Nature teaches, is such as Nature in the present weak Condition cannot perform.— And we are fallen from the State in which God first placed us.” Now concludes your Lordship, the Almighty permitted Men to come into this Condition that they might be Objects of his Mercy, and for the clear Manifestation of his Goodness, and that every one should stand in Need of his Pity and Compassion, and call upon him for Assistance, Mercy and Pardon. [*Bishop of London’s Mosaic Account of the Fall*, p. 30, 31, 32, 34, 35.] I hope your Lordship will excuse me, I cannot help terming this Stuff, *Old Woman’s Divinity*.

(d) See the *Articles of Religion*, particularly that, *Of Original Sin*.

Means of entailing on his Posterity, a diseased Body, and a rotten Constitution. Every Man suffers for his own Sin; for every Vice has annexed to it its Inconvenience or Punishment; and every Virtue has also its Reward annexed to it, all in this Life.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Tenth Discourse, Vol. II. p. 274.

"Some Evils there are, says your Lordship, which are natural, which are born with us, and from which no Circumstances or Condition of Life can ever deliver us; such is the Fear of Death."

I once thought so too; and, perhaps, might have continued so to do, if I had not happened, to have visited the Empire of the *Mogul*, when I was about Thirty Years of Age; in which Empire I met with many whole Nations, among whom I could not perceive any such Idea, as the Fear of Death. These People, though they are what we call *Heathens*, *Infidels*, &c. believe, that there is a Being who was the Author of all Things; and who is, as they say, the common Father, Friend and Benefactor of Mankind; but they never heard of an eternal *Lucifer*, of Fire and Brimstone, Hell, eternal Punishments, and Devils that shall plague and torment them in a future and eternal State. They think, with the Wise Man (e), *that that which befalleth the Sons of Men, befalleth the Beasts; even one Thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one Breath; so that a Man hath no Pre-eminence above a Beast. All go unto one Place; all are of the Dust, and all turn to Dust again; wherefore there is nothing better than that a Man should rejoice in his own Works; for that is his Portion.*

It is the frightful scarecrow and terrible Notions we are bred up with concerning our Immortality and future State, that makes us afraid of Death. Who

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(e) Eccles. iii. 19, 20, &c.

can say, we are afraid of being born? and, Why should we be afraid of dying? For these Reasons, my Lord, I cannot hold with you, that the Fear of Death is natural; but I do allow, that it is artificial. To teach and inculcate which, is the Duty, or Business, of the *Christian* Priesthood of every Denomination.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Fourteenth Discourse, Vol. II. p. 324.

" The Sun knows its Course, and has always trod  
 " the Path marked out by the Creator; the Sea keeps  
 " its old Channel, and, in its utmost Fury, remem-  
 " bers the first Law of its Maker, *Hitherto shalt thou*  
 " *go, and no farther* : But Freedom and Reason (in  
 " Man) subject to no such Restraint, have produced  
 " infinite Variety in the rational World."

This Variety is occasioned divers Ways, but in no Way, is it so evident as in the Invention of Revelation and Theology. When Men first began to teach (or to fancy) God to speak to them, either orally, intuitively, or by Inspiration, what Variety of new Doctrines and Customs did it introduce! The Law of *Moses*, and the Invention of Bloody Sacrifices, and the whole *Jewish* Ritual are Evidences of this. And I think, the *Constantine* Spiritual and *Artificial* *Christian* Religion, now taught in all Parts of *Christendom*, is so too. *Mahometism*, also, is a strong Evidence of this Variety.

*Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther*, are the Words which the Lord spake to *Job* out of the Whirlwind. Mighty elegant! Priests can make Whirlwinds speak! This Expression is borrowed by the Author, or rather Compiler of the Book of *Job*, from *Gen. i. 9.* where it is said, *Let the Waters under the Heaven be gathered together unto one Place, and let the dry Land appear.* How this Story of the Making of the Sea, and the Reasons for it, came to be invented, and inserted as



Part of the third Day's Creation, we shall see by consulting the Author of the before-mentioned Manuscript.

It happened, says he, on *Jeshua's* leading the Children of *Israel* through *Jordan* into the *Promised Land*. All the Host of *Israel* having forded *Jordan*, and encamped in the Plain between the River and the City of *Jericho*, *Jeshua* sent to the Inhabitants, and desired them to deliver up their Cities, Houses, Lands, and Possessions, alledging, that they belonged to the *Israelites*, as being the Descendants of *Abram* who was their Father. In Answer to this Claim of Right the *Canaanites* replied, that they knew nothing of their Father *Abram*, nor of his or their Right to their Country; affirming, that they had inhabited the Country for above Four Hundred Years; that they had imbanked the Sea, (now the *Mediterranean*) made the *Æstuaries* thereof, by Imbanking, into Rivers, drained the Lands, cultivated the same, and rendered the whole, fine arable and pasture Ground, &c. &c. The *Hebrew* Host were struck with the honest (and as they then thought *just*) Arguments of the *Canaanites*. And now all had been lost, and the People had returned into *Egypt*, if *Jeshua* and *Eleazar* the High Priest had not had Recourse to the following Stratagem. Which was, that the People should, on a Set-Day, come before the High Priest, and beg of him to enquire of the LORD, concerning what the *Canaanites* had asserted. Accordingly the People came, and *Eleazar* carried in the Question before the LORD, which Question was, Whether the Imbanking of the Sea and Rivers were the Works and Achievements of the *Canaanites*, or not? *Eleazar*, after some Time, and after he had inserted the Answer into the *Mosaic* Writings, brought for Answer, the Words of our present ninth and tenth Verses of the first Chapter of *Genesis*, And God said, Let the Waters under the Hea-

vens be gathered together unto one Place, and let the dry Land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry Land Earth, and the Gathering together of the Waters called be Seas. Eleazar from hence told the People, that it was plain, GOD, who was their GOD only, did, on the third Day of the Creation, imbank the Sea and Rivers, and that therefore the Lands were the Property of the *Hebrews*, as the Descendants of *Abraham* their Father. This satisfied the ignorant *Israelites*; and then it followed, that they drove out, and destroyed the *Canaanites*, as described in the Book of *Joshua*.

On this Discourse I shall only farther observe, that your Lordship seems, p. 336, to look on the Custom of carrying Ambulatory Portable Fires before Camps and great Bodies of Men travelling over Desarts, in the Case of the *Hebrews* to be miraculous, that is, that the Glory of the LORD did appear in two Pillars, the one a Cloud of Light, and the other of Darknefs, to direct the *Hebrews* through the *Wilderness*. It was, my Lord, the Custom of the *Easterns*, but more especially of the *Hebrews*, and particularly of their *Scribes*, to relate the most trifling Circumstances in an amazing and supernatural Manner, to make the most common Things, by a fallacious Representation, the most important. It was their Way of *Puffing*, as it is now termed.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Sixteenth Discourse, Vol. II. p. 369.

The Fall of *St. Peter* is the Circumstance your Lordship has given us this Discourse upon, as a Matter of human Frailty, when in Reality *Peter's* Denial of *Jesus* of *Nazareth* to *Pontius Pilate's* Domesticks was only a Matter of Prudence. *Jesus* was accused of High Treason against the *Roman* Emperor, in making himself a King. Now had *Peter* said, he was a Party with, and a Disciple of the Accused,  
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he would have been taken into Custody, sentenced to Death, and it is likely would have spoiled that beautiful Condition, in which *Jesus* was crucified, viz. between two Thieves (*f*). But what is most remarkable in this *Constantine* Story (for it was made in the Beginning of the Fourth Century) of the Fall of *St. Peter*, is the unpardonable Ingratitude of our Apostle, for *Jesus* had miraculously cured *Peter's* Wife's Mother of a most contagious pestilential Fever, and saved *Peter's* Life, when he without Faith attempted to leave his Fisher-boat, and meet *Jesus* walking upon the Sea (*g*). The whole History of *Peter*, from Beginning to End, is a confused Narrative, which hath neither Head nor Tail, invented by several Persons, and at various Times. This Part was made by one (perhaps by Pope *Sylvester*) to give *St. Peter*, and in him the Clergy such a Power; and when the Ecclesiastical Body wanted another Power, which before they had not thought of, then another Story was invented to convey to *Peter*, the Power the Pope and his Brethren wanted, and then inserted in one of the *Gospels*, that whatever Power the Apostles had might descend to their Successors, as it does to every Clergyman down to this Day. *Peter*, however, to do him Justice, was the only one of the Disciples who followed *Jesus* to his Trial, all the rest very prudently fled. Even the beloved Disciple, who lay but just before in his Master's Bosom ran away, and *Jesus's* Mother and *Mary Magdalen*, and all the Women who tagged along with him through *Judea*, *Decapolis*, *Jordan*, and the Regions round about, for the Space of twelve Months, deserted him. Indeed, the Story of the Crucifixion introduces the *Holy Virgin*, *Mary Magdalen*, and the beloved Disciple standing

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(*f*) Mark xv. 27. " And with him [*Christ*] they crucify two Thieves; the one on his right Hand, and the other on his left."

(*g*) John xxi. 7.

afar off, (but not so far off but they could hear the Voice of *Jesus*) to see the last of *Jesus* as they then thought. But all these Stories are filled with so many Absurdities, and idle and ridiculous Circumstances, that till I am in the Possession of a good fat Living, (which I wish I was, for I want it) I cannot say, I believe one of them. It is, my Lord, the Temporalities, the Deodands, the Benefices, the Pluralities, the Commendams, &c. which find Votaries to support *Spiritual* or *Artificial Christianity*. It is now a Living, an Art, a Trade, a Calling, to which Parents train up and destine their Children, viz. they send them to the *University*, at great Expence, to render them capable of teaching *Artificial Christianity*, that *Artificial Christianity*, which I have before described to be made by the Fathers of the Church under the Emperor *Constantine*, and his Successors. The *Christian* Clergy of the present Age, by Oaths and Subscriptions are as much imposed upon themselves, as the Laity are imposed upon by them. The only Difference is, the Clergy are well paid for such Imposition, and the Laity bear the Burthen. And to carry the Farce on, it is very likely, by such like Stories as this of the Fall of *St. Peter*, &c. we the Laity may be punned upon for many Ages yet to come.

Remarks on Your Lordship's Eighteenth Discourse, *Vol. II. p. 405, &c.*

The Design of this Sermon is to establish the Doctrine of a future Judgment. Your Lordship says, That Reason tells us, that Sin will be punished, that the very Being of a God declares that he will punish Sin; and that in Order to fix the eternal Rewards of the Righteous and the Wicked, there will be at the End of the World, a general Judgment. In Order to see, whether this is Truth or not, let us enquire, How and for what End, the Doctrine of a general Judgment



Judgment was invented and established. The first Description of a general Judgment ever revealed unto us, is, that contained in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth Chapters of *St. Matthew*. Please to read the Description. This is a spiritual Judgment. But the primary Judgment was a temporal Judgment, and related to that Judgment, which the Messiah would make at the Time when he took on him the Rule of the whole World, and when he should sit on his Judgment-Seat, to determine to whom he should grant Rewards for their Attachment to his Interest, or what Punishments he should inflict on those who should have been found his Enemies, and Rebels to his Crown and Dignity. It was in this Kingdom, *Christ* promised to place the twelve Apostles (and which they expected) on Thrones to judge the twelve Tribes of *Israel*.

The *Jews*, nor the *Heathens*, nor the *Christians*, before the *Constantine* Age, ever thought, that Men should be raised to Life again after Death, and, cloathed with their Bodies, be brought to Judgment at the End of the World. When the *Constantine* Fathers had invented one Doctrine, they were often obliged to invent half a Dozen more to support that which they had first invented; and then also they were afterwards obliged to invent an infinite Number more, to support the Six they had invented to support the Former; and then when all failed, they (the Fathers and Bishops of the Church) were obliged to have Recourse to Anathema, Censures, Curses and the Secular Arm to enforce the Belief of them. Thus when they had preached, that the Body would rise at the last Day, they thought proper to make it accountable for the Actions it did in Life. To reward those that had done Good, they invented for them *Heaven*, a Place where they should live eternally, and enjoy Pleasures inconceivable. To punish those that should  
do

do Evil, they invented for them *Hell*, a Place of Torment and eternal Punishment. In the first of these chimerical Places, (for both of them subsist only in the Noddles of *Churchmen*) they have placed God; and in the latter the *Devil*. Now to distribute these Rewards and Punishments impartially, they have contrived to place *Christ* on a Throne judging the whole World; but then this is to be at the End of the World. Hence came the Doctrine of a future Judgment. It sprang, my Lord, out of the temporal Judgment, which the *Christians* expected would be held on *Christ's* Second Coming, which Second Coming, the Primitive *Christians* daily expected through almost Three Centuries. I have not now Time nor Room to shew, that all the Stories of *Christ's* Coming to Judgment at the End of the World, recorded in the *Evangelists*, were made after the Death of *Christ*, and inserted to serve several Purposes; but if I should have any Occasion to write on this Subject hereafter, I will not forget to do it.

*The Author's Advice to the Bishop of LONDON.*

A late Writer (Mr. *Berington*) says, “the Enemies  
 “ of Divine Revelation grow more numerous every  
 “ Day than other, and Infidelity pours in upon us  
 “ on all Sides; the detestable Fruits of which are  
 “ too conspicuous in the dreadful Inundation of Wickedness and Corruption overflowing the Face of  
 “ the whole Earth; the Consequences are the most  
 “ deplorable, both for this Life and the next; for it  
 “ is as certain that there is a Life to come, as that  
 “ we have an immortal Soul that will not die with  
 “ the Body.”

Whoever will give himself the Trouble to read your Lordship's *Letter to the Clergy and Inhabitants of the Cities of London and Westminster*, occasioned by the late

*late Earthquakes*, will find, that your Lordship places the Growth of Immortality, and the Practice of all the Vices, to the Infidelity of Mankind in Respect to certain Myſteries ſaid to be contained in Religion and Revelation.

If we allow this to be a true State of the Caſe, which it is far from being; may we not enquire into the State of Piety among the Moderns, and ſee, if ſomething may not be offered to ſhew, that though Men do not ſo generally believe what is delivered to them for Divine Revelation, yet they are not wanting in the Public Practical Parts of Morality and Piety. Suppose, we were to take a cursory View of the many Charities ſet on Foot ſince the Beginning of this Century. I have not Room to recite them all; to give a brief Deſcription of them would take up a large Volume. The principal of them are; *Guy's Hoſpital*, *St. George's Hoſpital*, the *Foundling Hoſpital*, the *London Hoſpital*, the *Westminster Hoſpital*, *St. Luke's Hoſpital* for Lunatics; Five or Six Lying-in Hoſpitals, and the Several County Hoſpitals; the Erection of innumerable leſſer Hoſpitals called *Alms-houſes*, and Abundance of *Charity-Schools* and *Free-Schools*; the Bounty of *Queen Anne*, in giving to the Augmentation of Poor Livings, the *First-Fruits* and *Tenths* of all the Livings in *England*; and the Act of the Tenth of her Reign for the Building of Fifty new Churches in and about *London*. Lay all theſe Things together; (your Lordſhip's favourite Expreſſion) and add, if you pleaſe, what vaſt Sums have voluntarily been raiſed by particular Pariſhes to rebuild their old and decayed Churches, which if mulded together would appear an incredible Sum, what will Poſterity ſay, will they believe, when they conſider the Number of pious Acts performed by the *Moderns*, the Character which *Your Lordſhip*, and a *Popiſh Bigot*, have thought fit to ſigmatize them with?

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My Lord, it is not the Disbelief of Revelation, and of Myſteries, that hath occaſioned the Deluge of Immorality complained of; but it is rather, on the other Hand, the enforcing on Men, the Belief of Impoſſibilities, Incredibilities, and of Things never tranſacted, the Idea whereof never ſubſiſted but in the Dreams of *Theologians*. Go, my Lord, into thoſe Parts of the World, that never heard of *Chriſt*, the Immortality of the Soul, and future Rewards and Punishments in another Life, and ſee if their Morals do not infinitely ſurpaſs our's. I have, I think it is in Mr. *Oglethorpe's* Hiſtory of *Carolina*, or *Georgia*, read, that the Natives of thoſe Places, or of one of them, I have not the Book by me, were not before the *Chriſtians* came among them guilty either of *Drunkenneſs* or *Adultery*. It is not the Belief of the long Catalogue of *Chriſtian* Articles of Faith that makes a Perſon a better Man; no, it is his Actions. The World has not been bettered by the Introduction of *Revealed Religion*; Men by leaving Morality to truſt to Revelation, have leant on a broken Reed. They have left off to ſee with their own Eyes, and have truſted to thoſe of others; and it is no Wonder they are bewildered.

*Moses* was the firſt Man that introduced *Religion* by *Revelation*; which he imagined would be eaſier underſtood than *Natural* or *Moral Religion*. *Revealed Religion* commands and directs Men to be good and righteous, becauſe it is the Will of God; you are to be holy to pleaſe God; and to ſubmit to revealed Rules and Doctrines implicitly. This is not the Caſe of *Moral Religion*; every Man receives it upon its own Worth and Uſefulneſs; *Moral Religion* adviſes and counſels Men to walk uprightly; you are to do Good to your Neighbour, becauſe he ſhould do Good to you. You are to aid and aſſiſt one another; you are to love one another; and all Things that ye would  
that



that Men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them : for these were the Rules by which Men were governed before the Discovery of *Revealed Religion* by *Moses*.

To speak truly and plainly, the Immorality and Licentiousness of the present Age flows, in a great Measure, from the Conduct of the Clergy. See the Ecclesiastick compassing, as it were, Sea and Land, to get Preferment, to join Benefice to Benefice, and Dignity to Dignity. The Ardour is so great, that no one can in the least doubt, but the only Design is Gain. In their moral Character guilty of every Vice; nay, it is only Teeth outwards, as is easily perceived, that they believe the *Great Truths*, as they call them, *Revealed Religion*, they say they believe, but think otherwise interiorly. I wish I had a small Sum for every *Deist* (I will go no farther) there is among the Clergy of this Kingdom.

In Order to reform the rising Generation, I would advise your Lordship to revive Archbishop *Cranmer's* Plan of establishing in every Cathedral, Professors of Divinity, &c. and under the Wing of each Bishop breeding up such a Number of Youths in *Literature* and *Holiness*, as might, on every Occasion, be transplanted into every Part of a Diocese, to minister in holy Things. This would be far better than the present Method of Education in our Universities; *Places*, I am sorry, to say it, rife with every Vice said to be practised of old in the imaginary Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and one more, and that is *Hypocrisy*!

To proceed. In my own Judgment, but that may be erroneous, the Clergy ought not either to pay *First-Fruits* or *Tenths*. It was a horrid and cruel Imposition, especially as to *Tenths*, and King *Henry* the First, who imposed these *Annates*, did it in Order to lay a Sort of Restriction upon the Clergy; for he ordained, that every Clergyman that was married, or

who kept a Concubine, (as was the general Practice of the Clergy of that Time) should, for such a Privilege, pay annually into the *Exchequer* the tenth Part of his Living. So general was the Practice of *Marriage* or *Concubinage* then among the Clergy, that all the Livings (few only excepted, such only who never were served with Clerks who were either married or kept Concubines) were in a short Time registered in the *King's Books*, and paid *Annates* for these great Privileges.

When the *Reformation* appeared, and declared the Celibacy of the Clergy, to be the Doctrine of Devils, (as I and all the good Women of *England* think it) *Henry*, who took a particular Delight in destroying Monasteries, and pillaging the Clergy, instead of giving up the *Annates* to the Clergy (as in Justice he ought) made a fresh Valuation of the Livings of *England*, and protested, that they belonged to the Crown, and ought to be paid, because they were the Price of the *Privilegium coëundum*. However, ever since this Time, no one of our Princes have made a new Valuation; which if done, it would raise a fine Sum towards the Accomplishment of *Queen Anne's* pious Intentions. But since, I am afraid, that will never be done; (for I observe, that the Scheme of Politicks seems of late Years to be, not to grant to Churchmen new or additional Powers and Revenues, so I would not advise farther to oppress them; for some of them, God knows, have hard Work, with a Wife and two or three Children to make both Ends to meet; nay, some, notwithstanding their utmost Diligence and Oeconomy, have been distressed, and I was visiting a Prison wherein six Clergymen at one Time were confined for Debt;) I have a Scheme to propose to your Lordship and your Brethren the Bishops for the better and more honourable Maintenance of the *English Clergy*. I humbly propose the Conso-

lidation

solidation of several little Livings into one, that no Living, besides Surplice-Fees, Gift-Sermons, &c. be less than 200 *l.* a-year; that a Living may be more without Limitation; for Instance, in the City of *London*, let every Ward be erected into a Parish, the Bounds of every Ward to be the Bounds of the Parish, and so *vice versa*. Now this would, in general, make Livings, none under 200 *l.* and not one would exceed 1000 *l.* a-year. To this it might be objected, that one Church in a Ward would not be sufficient to receive the Number of its Inhabitants. I answer, this would be the Case of but two Wards, *viz.* *Cripplegate*, and *Faringdon Without*. At this Time, the Church of *St. Botolph Aldgate* receives all the Church-People in the Ward of *Portoken*, and in that Part of the Parish which is in the County of *Middlesex*; the Church of *St. Magnus* at the Bridge-Foot is capable of receiving all the Church-People in the Ward of *Bridge Within*, and if Room should be wanting, a North and a South-Gallery might easily be erected; the noble Edifice of *Christ-Church*, with a little Extension of Galleries, would hold all the Church-People in the Ward of *Faringdon Within*; but if not, the rest might go to *St. Paul's*. In *Castle-Baynard* Ward, the Church in the *Wardrobe* is sufficient. Your Lordship sees what I mean. Now, if this was done, as I hope it will, next Sessions, what Clergyman would grumble to pay either *First-Fruits* or *Tenths*; for most of the Clergy are better pleased to pay *Tenths* for 500 *l.* a-year, than for 30 or 40 *l.* a-year.

But this will reduce the Sixty-one Churches in the City to Twenty-three; it will; there are too many Churches in fact; and their Congregations are so small and scanty, that I have found at the Generality of the little Churches in the Heart of the City of a *Sunday*, at the Time of Divine Service, only Thirty, Parson, Clerk, Men, Women and Children; unless

such little Church had an Organ ; and then perhaps you may see an Hundred. It is a Scandal to Religion to see thin and meagre Congregations ; but it is on the other Hand, a great Reputation to *Revealed Religion* to see a full and crowded Congregation, perhaps of One Thousand, Fifteen Hundred, or Two Thousand, as some Congregations about Town have. I take a particular Delight to see such a Congregation, it gives me as great a Pleasure as to hear that we have beat the *French*. It is like taking Heaven by Violence. But it will be said, thirty-eight Churches will be deserted by this Scheme, and left to run to Ruin, and what will become of the Clergy who at present fill these Cures ? To the first I answer, That the thirty-eight Churches be given to the Lord Mayor and Citizens of *London*, and that they be impowered to sell the holy Utenfils, Pews, Wainscot, Bells, &c. thereof, and that they apply the Money arising therefrom, and the Stone of the said thirty-eight Churches towards the Building of a Bridge cross the River of *Thames* from *Blackfriars* to the opposite Shore. To the Second I answer, It will, perhaps, happen in some of the new proposed Parishes, that there will be two or three beneficed Ministers to one Church, it is proposed that they do serve the Cure in Conjunction, preaching in Rota, and receiving the same Stipends they did before. When one of them is promoted, or should chance to die, in either Case, the two surviving Parsons shall equally divide the Sum the Deceased enjoyed ; and in like Case of Promotion or Death of the two Survivors, then the last shall have the whole Living ; and so it shall descend to all the Rectors of the new Parish. But that the Patrons may not lose their several Rights of Presentation, it shall be ordained, that the Senior Patron shall present first, and so successively.

Now, my Lord, if this Scheme should take Place,  
there



there will arise another very great Convenience to the Citizens of *London*. You must know, I have with great Pains and Exactness calculated the precise Time of the next great Earthquake that will happen in and about *London*; which will be a terrible one indeed! The Operation is too long to be contained within the Compass of this Pamphlet. It will happen on the fourth Day of *April*, *A. D.* 1762, at 7 *sec. post 2 mane*. The Shock will be astonishing, and the Vibration so strong, that the Cupola of *St. Paul's* (if my Advice is not taken) will overset Southerly, drive all the Houses down *St. Benner's Hill* to the *Thames*; in which Calamity will perish at least two Thousand Souls.

It is the Part, my Lord, of every honest Man, such I am, and such your Lordship thinks you are, to prevent foreseen Calamities; wherefore I earnestly beg of your Lordship and the Dean and Chapter of *St. Paul's* immediately to give the Cathedral to the Lord Mayor and Commonalty abovementioned for the Uses recited. They will be at least five or six Years taking it down; when that is done, build your Cathedral of Cedar, about fifteen or sixteen Foot high, strongly mortised and framed together; in Length and Breadth as you please; so that when the Shock cometh, (which I am as certain will come as your *Lordship* and the *Life-guard-man* were that we should shortly be visited with another Earthquake in the Year 1751,) it will no more affect your Cathedral than a Wave does a Ship in open Sea, when she runs before the Wind. Thus will the Lives of at least two Thousand of your Lordship's spiritual Subjects be saved; and the Stone (which will kill them, if not taken down before that Time) put to a much better Use than now, as I am sure all the Dissenters in the Kingdom will think; who in this Thought will be heartily joined by the *Daiſts*, *Freeſinkers* and *Libertines*. My Lord, a  
Bridge

Bridge crosses the River at *Blackfriars* will be (take my Word for it) of more Service to Mankind in one Year, than the thirty-eight Churches and the Cathedral to be demolished will in ten Years.

Again, my Lord, I have observed, that Uniformity of Sentiment and Opinion is greatly wanting in the Church of *England*, both among her Clergy and Laity. But this Evil might and would be rectified by establishing the following Scheme of Admission of Persons to be Priests, and by the following Method of instructing the People. I have somewhere read, that in *Pagan Rome*, which was divided into fourteen Wards, there were but twenty-eight Priests, two for each Ward, who were Men remarkable for their Sobriety, of blameless Life and Character, and of an unspotted Reputation; and of Fifty Years of Age, No one Person among the *Romans* was advanced to the Priesthood till he was Fifty Years of Age; and pray among us, why should younger Persons be made Doctors and Teachers! And in the next Place the Method of instructing of the People which is as various as the Minds and Conceits of every Man is, should be uniform and general; and as we have one Form of Prayer which is common to the whole Kingdom, I cannot see what Absurdity there could possibly be in a common, uniform, regular and set Method of Preaching, which should be one and the same in all Parts of the Kingdom. In Order to which, my Lord, I would advise the *Right Reverend Bench* to sue to the Crown for Power to make a Sermon or Homily proper for every *Sunday* in the Year, which the Incumbent of every Parish should recite in his Church or Chapel, in the same Manner he doth now his Lessons. With this Difference only, that they should not be printed, but be recited from a Manuscript Book, which should be given to the Incumbent of every Parish or Cure by the Bishop of the Diocese.

Diocese. Which Manuscript Copy should descend to Successors. Hence it would follow, that in a very few Years both the Clergy and the Laity would think alike. But if it should be said, that in Process of Time these Sermons or Homilies would want either Amendment, Refinement, &c. I think once in twenty-five or thirty Years they might be new-modelled by the *Right Reverend Bench*, in the same Manner our Physicians do their *Pharmacopæia*.

Having thus finished these Remarks, they laid by me upwards of Four Months, and might have laid there till the Day of Doom, for Want of a Conclusion, had not the following Accident produced one.

I had spent an Afternoon with a Friend of mine in *Fulham* Field, where I staid till about Nine of the Clock in the Evening, when I determined to go and lodge at the *King's Arms*, at the Foot of *Fulham* Bridge. It was a fine clear Moon-light Night, and walking through your Lordship's Walks to my intended Lodging, I was entertained with the Croaking of Crows and Ravens, to such a Degree, that I concluded all the Ravens, Rooks and Crows were assembled together from all Parts of the Country for many Miles round, particularly those from the *Temple*, the *Charter-House*, and *Lincoln's Inn*, &c. As I passed on the South of your Lordship's Palace, I overtook a little old Woman, who accosted me thus: Lord! Sir, what a dismal Noise this Croaking is! my Lord the Bishop will die! Why, says I, is the Croaking and Cawing of Crows and Ravens a Sign of Death? Yes, Sir, said she, I have always observed it so to be. Pish! said I, I have known the Death of many Bishops, my Intimates, and this is a sure Sign of the Death of a Bishop with me, I always about a Month before see an Owl. O! says the old Woman, I never heard that was a Sign of Death before;

fore; but I do believe that the Signs of Death are various to different People; I could relate several Particulars of this Sort. But this, continued she, has been to me the Sign of the Death of three of my good Masters the Bishops; the Woman spoke as if your Lordship was really dead. I have lived, said she, Sir, in this Parish upwards of Fifty Years; I knew Bishop *Compton* who was a very good Man; (she did not mention Bishop *Robinson*, for he seldom resided at *Fulham*) Bishop *Gibson* who was a good Man; and as for this Gentleman (meaning your Lordship) he is very rich; but this I am sure of, he will shortly die.

By this Time we came to the Town, and I took my Leave of the old Woman, giving her a Shilling; but though I got rid of her, I could not of the Noise of the Crows and Ravens, which accompanied me to the *King's Arms*. Where going into a Room, I called for a Bottle of Wine, and desired the Company of my Landlord. To him I imparted the Story of the old Woman, who said, that it was certain, there had been lately a great Assembly and Noise of these Birds, and that his Lordship (meaning your Lordship) was very old and infirm, and that it was supposed you could not live long.

This immediately struck me, and I determined to finish these *Remarks*, and send them to the *Press*, and get them published before your Lordship's *Apotheosis* came on. When my Landlord, for I was in the Room where I was to lie, was withdrawn, I sat up, and spent great Part of the Night in Writing; and having finished my Performance, I began to think what your Lordship and the World would say of it upon Publication; and I concluded as follows, That your Lordship reading in the Papers the Advertisement of these *Modest Remarks*, and your Chaplain coming to see you, your Lordship asked him, Whether



ther he had seen it? meaning this Pamphlet. To this your Chaplain will answer, Yes, my Lord; and immediately add, that he had bought one, and brought it with him. Well, Doctor, your Lordship will then say, have you read it? Yes, my Lord, he will reply; but it is such a Piece of Stuff, Jargon, and Nonsense, &c. that I have no Patience with it. Then your Lordship will say, But pray, Sir, let me hear why and wherefore he has attacked me? The Doctor will say, It is not worth while. And that, my Lord, will be really true. But your Lordship will not be satisfied with this Answer; and therefore you will desire your Chaplain to give you a particular Account of the Contents of my Pamphlet. Which he must do much in the following Manner: My Lord, I do not know where the Author received his Education; I am sure it could not be at either of the *Universities*, for he has begun his Work in the Middle, and in the oddest Manner I ever saw, he proceeds orbicularly. It is a Method of Writing I am not acquainted with. However, my Lord, in this circular Method, peculiar indeed to himself, he tells us, that there was a Kind of Christianity, that took Place as early as *Christ* and his Apostles, which he denominates *Natural Christianity*. *Natural Christianity*, your Lordship will say, what can that be? What does the Blockhead (that is the Name, my Lord, I deserve) mean? Your Chaplain will then read to you the Passage as in *Page* 10, &c. When he has done. Hie, your Lordship will say, two Christianities, the like I never heard before!! You see, my Lord, your Chaplain will continue, this Fellow imagines, that Christianity for the first three Centuries had nothing in it but what is temporal, that the Expectations relative to the Messiah were all natural and carnal, and that these natural and carnal Expectations occasioned the Death of *Christ*, his Apostles, and the

Ten Persecutions. This, my Lord, is what this Infidel calls his *Natural Christianity*. Now as for his *Spiritual Christianity*, which is what he has the Assurance also to call the *Present Artificial Christianity*, he has the unparalleled Impudence to affirm, that the *Constantine* (he means also, the *Nicene*) Fathers changed every then carnal, natural and temporal *Christian Doctrine* into spiritual Doctrines, whose Completion was not to be determined till the End of the World, or Dissolution of all Things. But, my Lord, this is tolerable in our Author, had he gone no farther, but he has so littleated *Jesus Christ*, that he has brought him down to a mere Man, and says, that he only patrolled *Judea, Galilee, &c.* for about twelve Months, in the Company of his Mother, divers other Women, some of the worst Character, and about a Dozen idle illiterate Men (whom After-time have advanced to be Apostles and Saints) telling the People, that he was the Messiah the *Jews* expected, and that if they would adhere to him, he would at the Feast take on him the Kingdom of his Father *David*. Thus, my Lord, he represents the Author of our Faith in very low Terms, and as for *St. Paul* he endeavours to prove him an Enthusiast and a Visionary; and then has the Effrontery to charge your Lordship with purposely misrepresenting *St. Paul, Acts xv. 1, 2.* He has, my Lord, the oddest Way of interpreting Scripture I ever met with, and which he calls, the natural Way of understanding the Writings of the *New Testament*. He has used your Lordship very faucily and impertinently, far from having that Respect for the *Episcopal Dignity* (to which I hope to come!) every good Christian ought to have; and says, though in my Opinion he has not, nor never will be able to do it, he will prove your Lordship to be an Enthusiast, and one who endeavours to impose, in Conjunction with the *Constantine*

*tine* Fathers, your *Spiritual Christianity* on the World, to the utter Abolition of *Natural Christianity*. Here your Lordship will observe, that the Author cannot be a *Christian*;—but what Punishment does he deserve for his Infidelity; lets see, must we who are *Christs* Vicegerents, we who are invested with the Power of punishing such Blasphemers sit still, and see and hear our *Lord and Blessed Saviour*, who died for our Sins, and shed his precious Blood for our Redemption, thus reviled, despised and mocked at. Your Chaplain will very prudently reply, My Lord, it is the best Way to let him alone; for he seems neither to fear God, believe there is a *Devil*, a Resurrection, nor a final Judgment, and he certainly must be some *Garrateer*, and not worth *Powder and Shot*; and you know, my Lord, when those *Ingredients* are wanting, *Canons* are of but little Use.

My Lord, let the little Philosophers carp and snarl, yet this must be allowed by all sensible Men, that your Lordship's Sermons have especially at this Time, when Books of Irreligion, and almost Atheism and Infidelity have been published by great Men, been of great Service to the Church of *Christ*, and prevented the Poison and Venom of Deism from taking deeper Root in the Minds of Men.

But, my Lord, whoever this idle Fellow is, he has had the Audacity to interweave in his Work, in the orbicular Way, one or two ludicrous Things on *Earthquakes*. Here your Lordship will shake your Head, and say, Ay *Earthquakes*, I wish I had never meddled with them! and sigh. He says, my Lord, that he has with the greatest Nicety and Exactness calculated the next great *Earthquake*, which he affirms will happen on the fourth Day of *April* in the Year 1762 at seven Seconds after Two of the Clock in the Morning. He says, the Vibration will be so strong, that

it will overfet in *London* the Monument, the Mansion-house, all the Parish Steeples, with the Cupola of your Lordship's Cathedral. Here your Lordship will figh and fay, very truly, *I fhall not live to fee it*. To prevent the Confequences of this Calamity, he propofes to your Lordship and the Dean and Chapter of *St. Paul's*, to take down that auguft Fabrick, and to give the Stone thereof to the Mayor and Commonalty of *London*, in Order to enable them to build a Bridge crofs the River of *Thames* from *Blackfriars* to the opposite Shore. If this be not done, the Cupola of *St. Paul's*, he avers, at the Time of the *Earthquake* will overfet Southerly, roll down the Hill to the River, and deftroy at leaft two Thoufand Souls then fleeping in their Beds.

While your Chaplain read this, your Lordship dozed a little, and recovering yourfelf, you will be heard to fay, *But I am afraid the Dean and Chapter will never agree to it; for this I am fure I fhall never fee my Church more*. But, Doctor, I beg you would remind me, when my Brother *Wincheſter* cometh, whom I expect to fee in a Day or two, I will mention to him the Affair of *Blackfriars* Bridge; if he will join me, (and it is his Intereſt fo to do, for a Bridge there will greatly improve his Patrimony, and increafe the Number of People in his Dioceſe) we will make a *Purſe*: —Let's fee, of —; of ——— Thouſands; I have a very great Regard for the Lord Mayor and the Aldermen of *London* (his Lordship remembers how the Court of Aldermen puffed his Letter on the *Earthquakes*) they uſed me very handſomely in Relation to my Letter concerning the *Earthquakes*; I am determin'd to make them Amends. *A Bridge! Lord, I fhall never live to fee the Foundation of it laid!*

Now-about the Parlour-Door will open, and your Lordship's Footman will be heard to fay, *My Lord,*  
the



*the Archdeacon of E*—; Who being seated, your Lordship will ask him, Whether he has seen this Pamphlet? Yes, my Lord, he will say, I sent to my Bookseller for it, as soon as I was up this Morning, and I have read it carefully through, and not doubting but your Lordship will punish him for his Insolence, I have noted several Passages of it, on which your Lordship may order him to be proceeded against either in your own Court by Citation, or at Common Law by Indictment. To induce your Lordship to punish him, I will lay before you one Instance of the Impudence of this Writer, where, p. 30, 31. speaking of the Establishment of *Christianity* at the Time of *Constantine*, he says; *Revelations of the Divine Will by Impulses, Appearances of the Holy Ghost, of the Apostles, of Saints and Martyrs were nightly forged and daily published.* Now, though I allow, we have, at present, no Law to punish such an Expression, yet he might be indicted on the following Articles, and, I am sure, a *Grand Jury* might be found by your Lordship that would present the Author. Art. 1. *That he has blasphemously denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.* Art. 2. *That he has also blasphemously asserted, that the Holy Ghost was never heard of before the pretended Descent of that Being on the Apostles.* Whereas your Lordship well knows, that the *Holy Ghost* was concerned in the great Work of the Creation; and is mentioned in the first Chapter of *Genesis*, thus: *And the Spirit moved on the Face of the Waters*; which Spirit all Commentators affirm to be the third Person in the *Holy and Undivided Trinity*. Art. 3. *The Author's Comparison in the Marginal Note, p. 57. is downright Blasphemy, and such an Affront on Christianity as is unpardonable.* Art. 4. *He impiously denies the Existence of the Soul, and the comfortable Doctrines of future Rewards and Punishments.* Art. 5. *He very irreligiously proposes*  
the

*The Destruction of Parish Churches and Cathedrals*; and God knows were they abolished there would be no Religion. Many other Articles I could add, but one or all are sufficient to lay an Indictment against him.

Your Lordship will reply: To cite him into the Consistory-Court will not sound well; it will look like Persecution, and if we attempt to indite him, the Laity will say, *Let them refute his Arguments, the Press is open.* I have been thinking what may be done. There is a young Clergyman, in Regard to whom several Sollicitations have been made to me to promote him, let it be insinuated to him, it would be pleasing to me, that he should lick the Author with his Pen, and ridicule him. [*This was agreed to.*]

But now, my Lord, I will beg Leave to suppose myself present when thus accused by your Archdeacon, and allowed to answer to the *First Article*, which I would do in the following Manner.

It is true, Gentlemen, I have denied the Divinity of *Christ*, and I thought I was justified in so doing, from the constant Practice and Usage of the *Christians* of the first three Centuries; and likewise from the Example of a great Multitude of *Christians* who have lived in the several Periods of *Christianity* since that Time. But I have found out my Mistake. For tho' *Jesus of Nazareth* was not God before the Year *Three-hundred-twenty-five*, yet since that Time *He* is a God; and I do allow, that the *Nicene Council* then held, had a Power to make *Jesus of Nazareth* a God; and therefore, Gentlemen, I do believe, that ever since that Time, *Jesus of Nazareth* is a God, though before that Time he was only a perfect Man. So likewise, I do allow, that the *Holy Ghost* is God, because the same Power made him such; but that the Progression of the *Holy Ghost* was not found out till the Year 787, when those Words, *Who proceedeth from the Father*  
and

and the Son; were first inserted into the *Nicene Creed*. And as all Nations and Councils formerly had Power to make who they would a *God*, so the great Council of this Nation has the same Power; and if the *Convocation* was to meet shortly, and agree to advance to the *Godship* the Apostle *St. Paul*, and this was confirmed by Parliament, he, *St. Paul*, would certainly from that Time become a *God*, and every *Briton* (I am sure I should) ought to deem him as such.—The *Nicene Fathers* found themselves under an absolute Necessity to advance *Jesus of Nazareth* to the *Godship*, to give him Power to abolish or confirm what they pleased in the *Mosaic* or Ceremonial Law. Again, If they had not made *Jesus of Nazareth* God, they could never have taught, that he was before *Abraham* and *Moses*, and that he was greater than *Moses*. It was for this End, that all the wonderful Stories, recorded of *Christ* in the *Gospels* were invented. It was a good Policy, and every Way worthy and prudent. And as Speech and Ideas are (most of them) invented and introduced by Custom, and by political Reason, I grant that the Government of a Nation has a Right to oblige me to think as they please. For Instance, my Predecessors have determined in the great Council of this Nation, that *Christ* was born in a supernatural miraculous Manner; that this same *Christ* is God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, being of one Substance with the Father; and that there are three Persons of equal Power in the Holy and Undivided Trinity, and that the Father is incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible; and yet there are not three incomprehensibles, but one incomprehensible only. Now all this I confess I do not understand, but then I believe every Word of it, and think myself obliged so to do, because I find an Act of

William

*William and Mary* declaring this to be Truth. For it is in the Power of the great Council of this or any other Nation, to make, if they please, the grossest Absurdity, and the most palpable Imposture or Fiction absolute and real Truth. And this is no Wonder, because if we would give ourselves Time to consider Things, we should find, that Power can make what it pleases Truth; and that Men have invented all the *Revealed Religions* that have been in the World since the Birth of *Moses*.

Lastly, Your Lordship will farther ask your Chaplain, whether he has enquired who the Author of this Pamphlet is? And he will answer, I asked the *Bookseller* of whom I bought this, this Morning, who replied, Sir, I do not know the Author, the Copy was given to me by a Boy, and the *Proofs* were looked over by a Gentleman at *George's Coffee-house, Temple-Bar*; he did not know his Name, but that one of the Waiters said, that *He* was often there, drank nothing, staid an Hour, paid something at the Bar, but was observed often to pull out a *Greek Testament*, and sometimes a *Hesiod*, which Books he seemed always to have about him.

The D—n of *London* then coming to see your Lordship any farther Discourse will drop for the present; and for my future Punishment, your Lordship will consign me over to the final Judgment, where if your Lordship should appear and implead me, I shall much wonder at it!

However, as I returned through the *King's Road*, in the Morning to *London*, several Persons whom I met, and others whom I overtook, earnestly enquired of me after the State of your Lordship's Health; and one Man in particular told me, that he had travelled for a Month past, two or three times a Day, from *London* to *Fulham*, to watch the Time of your Lordship's



Lordship's Departure out of this Life. This Man informed me, that he belonged to an eminent Divine, and seemed to hint, that his Master had some Hopes of succeeding your Lordship. I told the Man, that I believed your Lordship could not live long, and that his Master certainly every Minute drew nearer to Elevation, and might therefore constantly use this pious Ejaculation, *Incipio esse Episcopum*; and I added, that I perceived, the Reverend Doctor his Master had for a long Time past practised that Ecclesiastical Parody, *Noli Episcopari*. I am,

*Your LORDSHIP'S Real Friend*

*and very Humble Servant*

PHILOTHEOS.



## P O S T S C R I P T.

*Dr. THO. SHERLOCK'S C R E E D, faithfully extracted from His Own WRITINGS.*

**I** T—S, by Divine Providence, now Bishop of  
 L—n, do sincerely believe the *Mosaic* Account of the Creation of the World, and of *Adam*, in Six Days, and that some Time after, perhaps on the eighth Day, *God* did take a Rib out of *Adam* as he lay on a Bank asleep in *Eden*, and of that Rib which I do believe *God* took out of *Adam*, and which Rib is now wanting in the Formation of every Man, he did make *Eve*, whereby the Woman hath one Rib more than a Man; that *God* did permit a Being, whom he had created before, an  
 O Immenſity

Immenfity of Years, now known by the Name of *Devil*, who is an eternal Spirit, to feduc *Eve* to eat a real Apple, which GOD had forbidden *Adam* to eat, but had not forbidden *Eve* to eat it; that ſhe did eat of the Apple, and finding it good for Food, did recommend it to, or give thereof to *Adam*, and that *Adam* did eat of it; that for this Crime, this Eating of the Forbidden Fruit, both *Adam* and *Eve* were accurfed, driven out of Paradife, the Earth curf- ed for their Sakes, and ordered to bring forth Briars and Thorns, and not to produce its Fruit without great Toil and Labour, and Sweat of Man's Brow; and that *Adam* and *Eve* did, by this great Offence, bring on their Children or Seed a natural Pollution or Contamination, whereby they and their Pofterity were always liable to the Wrath of an offended GOD; that GOD revealed himfelf to *Adam*, talked with him, and ſo he did to *Cain*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*, and *Mofes*; all whom did ſee him, but that few or none have ſeen GOD ſince; that he appeared to *Mofes* in a Burning Buſh, and the Buſh was not conſumed by the ſupernatural Flames; that he wrought all the Miracles in *Egypt* by the Hand of his Servant *Mofes*, divided the *Red Sea*, went before the Hoſts of *Israel* in two Pillars, in the one Pillar by Night, and in the other Pillar by Day, for the Space of Forty Years, to guide them through the *Wilderneſs of Zin*; that in the ſame Pillars of Light and Cloud GOD ſat on and filled the Tabernacle, inſomuch that the Priests could ſcarce ſtand and miniſter before the Lord; that GOD fed the *Israelites* with Manna for Forty Years, that he commanded them to be circumciſed, that He cauſed the Sun and Moon to ſtand ſtill for one whole Day; that he did work by certain Perſons, ſince called *Prophets*, whom he aſſiſted miraculoſly, many other Miracles, and did inſpire them to utter Predictions relative to the Meſſiah,

Messiah, all which were fulfilled in the Coming and Person of *Christ*; and lastly, that the Law was a Schoolmaster to bring Men unto *Christ*.

[*Thus far as a Jew.*]

Again, I, &c. do sincerely and verily believe, that the Twelve *Sibyls* did prophesy of *Christ*, that the Oracles, Demons, Spirits, Demoniacs and Devils, and all the *Heathen* Nations did expect the Appearance of the Messiah in the Flesh, that *Christ* himself did appear to St. *Paul* in his Way to *Damascus*, and ordered him to preach his *Gospel* to the *Gentiles*, that all those who before *Christ* did not know God have equally the same Right to become Members of the Kingdom of Heaven, that God can shed forth the Influences of his Holy Spirit for the Conversion of all *Turks*, *Chinese*, and *Infidels*; and it is for that End that I am one of those who support annually (with Ten Pieces) the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*.

[*Thus far as a Pagan.*]

Moreover, I, &c. do truly, verily and sincerely believe, that God the Father, sent into the World his only begotten Son, in the Fulness of Time, *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, the Wife of one *Joseph* a Carpenter; that this same *Jesus* did, when he was about Thirty Years of Age, open his Divine Mission, and, for Three Years and better, preached the Glad Tidings of the Salvation and Redemption of Mankind from Sin, and Damnation, and their final Admission into Heaven to receive the Rewards of their Righteousness and Obedience, and to live with the Lamb for ever and ever.

[*Thus far as a Spiritual Christian.*]

Lastly,

Lastly, The Children of the Kingdom, I believe, have been redeemed by the Blood of *Christ*, and are training up under the many Trials that surround them, by the Assistance of God's Holy Spirit, to be Heirs of Glory and Immortality. And the Time will come, when the Son of Man will come forth conquering and to conquer, and shall appear in full Power, and in the Glory of the Father, to subdue all his Enemies. Then shall the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, be fast bound, and cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone; and the Judgments of God denounced against the Wickedness of Men having their Completion, every Curse shall cease; (or as our Translation has it, *And there shall be no more Curse.*) Then shall the Loss of the Fall be repaired, Paradise be restored, and the Tree of Life shall yield her Fruit again, and the Leaves thereof shall be for the Healing of the Nations. *Amen.*

Note, *The B—— believes the Apocalypse to be the very Word of GOD, though he knows it was rejected as uncanonical, and as the Revelations of St. Papias, for upwards of Three Hundred Years.*

[Thus far as a Millenarian.]

**F I N I S.**

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**E R R A T A :**

**P**AGE 29. line 8. for *Maximinian*, read *Maximian*; p. 34. in the Note, l. 4. for *Alogi*, r. *Alogoi*; p. 38. l. 32. add *those*; p. 49. in the Note, l. 19, for *titular*, r. *tutelar*; p. 56. l. 33. add *the*; p. 79. l. 2. for *Immortality*, r. *Immortality*.